小日向さんと恋と

3

Uramikoi.Koi,Uramikoi.

秋タカ

ウラミコイ、コイ
ウラミコイ。

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

Uramikoi,Koi,Uramikoi.

秋タカ

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ウラミコイ、コイ、ウラミコイ。

秋タカ

手のひらに　隠しきれない

「恨めしい」。

1巻重版
お待たせしました！

2巻は
本日発売です☆

CHAPTER 10:
CHASING THE ENEMY WILL ALSO LEAD TO THE RAT

FUFUFU...

FU...

KEH
KAH
KAH

KAKAKAH!

KAHGH!

COUGH
COUGH!

URGH!

Gahck

WHO FALLS FOR SOMETHING LIKE THIS!? HAHAHAHA!

I THOUGHT YOU SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED, AND THEN...!

M-MY STOMACH! PFAH!

KAH HAHAH HAHAH! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING!?

IF YOU GET IT RIGHT, YOU'RE A GENIUS!

は

UH... UM, IT'S DAN-GEROUS,

YOU SHOULDN'T... TOUCH IT...

FELL DOWN

I can see the rope.

OHO. THIS IS A PRETTY ELABORATE PRANK.

THAT TRAP UP THERE WILL GO OFF IF I PRESS THIS, HUH.

...DANGEROUS?

BESIDES,

NO MATTER WHAT COMES AT ME,

HUMAN CURIOSITY GETS BIGGER THE MORE DANGEROUS SOMETHING IS.

Oui...

I DON'T FEEL LIKE I'LL EVER LOSE. THAT'S JUST WHO I AM.

CHAPTER 10: CHASING THE ENEMY WILL ALSO LEAD TO THE RAT

HEY!

URGH!!

IF YOU GET IT RIGHT, YOU'RE A GENIUS.

THE IDIOTS ARE MULTIPLYING!!??

GO TO SLEEP ALREADY, YOU BRATS!!!

HEY!!

Big fish!

Big fish!

THE BIG FISH DANCE

YOU SAID YOU NEVER LOSE, BUT DIDN'T YOU... JUST...

A-ARE YOU OKAY? ...WAIT,

IF YOU GET IT RIGHT, YOU'RE A GENIUS

BINGO!

OH, HE'S GOING TO PRETEND THAT THIS NEVER HAPPENED.

SO WHEN ARE WE GONNA GET TO THAT BOOKSTORE I'M LOOKING FOR?

ALRIGHT!

↓ SUPER RUDE

WAIT, DOES THAT MEAN THIS IS WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE WHEN I DO IT...!!?

Am I that much of a sucker?

IT'S JUST A LITTLE FURTHER.

I... I'M NOT THIS EASY TO FOOL... I THINK.

we're probably around the same age, anyway

OH, BY THE WAY, YOU DON'T NEED TO BE SO POLITE WITH ME.

I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYONE ELSE FALL FOR THOSE...

※SELF-RATIONALIZATION

THAT'S RIGHT. THEY SAY "PLEASE SAVE ME!" AND STUFF...

YOU JUST CAN'T LEAVE THEM ALONE...

KAHAHAHAH!

YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING ME! THEY MAKE SOME INTERESTING TRAPS!

OH YEAH! OF COURSE YOU CAN'T.

I TOTALLY GET YOU. IT JUST MAKES YOU CURIOUS, RIGHT?

I... I THOUGHT YOU WERE AN IDIOT...

WHY WOULD YOU DO SOMETHING DANGEROUS INTENTIONALLY...!?

ARE YOU STUPID, KYOICHI-SAN!?!

FINALLY, SOMEONE WHO UNDERSTANDS ME...! THIS MAKES ME SO HAPPY BECAUSE I'VE BEEN CALLED AN IDIOT SO MANY TIMES...

Oh?

.....

ANYWAY...

DAMN IT, I'LL SHOW THEM NEXT TIME!

WELL IN MY CASE, THE FUN IS IN HOW I CAN AVOID THE TRAPS AND OUTSMART THEM.

THIS IS WEIRD. I FEEL OFF TODAY...

I'M NOT USUALLY LIKE THIS, I'M NOT KIDDIN'!

N—NO, OF COURSE NOT!

OH REALLY.

TALKING LIKE 'AYAKA FOR SOME REASON

ARE WE LOST?

...FOR EXAMPLE,

WELL, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. WE ALL HAVE DAYS WHEN WE'RE NOT LIKE OURSELVES.

BUT MY PRIDE AS THE INVESTIGATION MASTER WON'T LET ME STOP HERE...

OH CRAP... I NEED TO GO BACK SOON, OR THEY'LL GET WORRIED ABOUT ME...

WHEN SOMETHING SAD HAPPENS TO YOU.

WELL,

I DON'T THINK WHAT I'M FEELING IS EXACTLY SADNESS...

HMM...

IT'S MY FAMILY'S BUSINESS, SO DON'T WORRY, FORGET ABOUT IT.

I GUESS THAT'S WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE ON THE OUTSIDE, BUT... SORRY, I'M BEING RUDE.

...

NOW THIS IS WHEN IT WOULD BE CONVENIENT TO LOOK AT THE MAP ON A PHONE.

HERE,

USE MINE.

KNEW IT, I DIDN'T BRING IT WITH ME...

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。3

I DROPPED THE WHISTLE..

OOPS,

OH,

THANKS...

N...

NOOOO!!

CRAP... IT BROKE..!? FROM THE DROP JUST NOW!?

TOO BAD,

PUPPY.

Gaaah! Sana's going to be mad at me...

UM...

NATSUHO-CHAN,

N-NO... IT'S OKAY...

This feels restricting

WHEN I TRIED IT ON... IT FELT LIKE SOMEONE FORCED ME TO WEAR IT...

UM...

JH.. JUH...

ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT MY COAT...?

TH—THEY'RE NOT THE RIGHT SIZE...

A... AND THEY HAVE HIS SCENT... SO I DON'T WANT TO.

OH, THEN WHAT ABOUT SENPAI'S CLOTHES...?

.....

SHE... SHE CAN... SHE CAN IDENTIFY HIS SCENT ALREADY!?

CH... TH... THAT MEANS...

RIGHT, THE SIZE...

IGNORING HER OWN NOSE

ONCE ALL THIS IS OVER, LET'S GO SHOPPING TOGETHER...!

...THAT'S RIGHT! IT'S MY FAULT TO BEGIN WITH, SO I'LL PAY YOU BACK!

SH— SHOP- PING...?

AS FRIENDS...?

YES...!

IT'LL BE FUN!

OH, SORRY. YOU DON'T LIKE BEING IN PLACES WHERE THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE...

OH, NO, THAT'S NOT...

I'LL DO MY... BEST.

IT'S JUST THAT IT'S MY FIRST TIME...

AND I'M... HAPPY...

CUTE...?

OF COURSE...!

WOULD... I LOOK GOOD IN... SOMETHING LIKE THAT...?

LET'S PICK OUT SOME CUTE OUTFITS FOR YOU!

THAT'S GREAT...!

...

BECAUSE YOU'RE CUTE TO BEGIN WITH, SO...

YOUR INSTINCTS MIGHT ACTUALLY REALLY BE SOMETHING.

...NATSUHO-CHAN,

?

AND THAT WHISTLE

WAS DESTROYED BY SOMEONE JUST NOW!

THAT WHISTLE WAS A SPECIAL ITEM ENCHANTED BY SENSEI FROM THE TORIDERA FAMILY.

IF SOMETHING WERE TO HAPPEN TO THE WHISTLE, I'D KNOW RIGHT AWAY.

PHEW, WHAT A RELIEF.

SO THIS USED BOOKSTORE HAD IT AFTER ALL.

剣道場
SO YOU FOUND THE BOOK YOU WERE LOOKING FOR?
YEP.
MY POPS LOVED THIS SERIES. HE'D STAY UP LATE READING IT WITH A DIFFICULT LOOK ON HIS FACE.
AND HE NEVER BOUGHT THE LAST VOLUME! CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?
...WELL,
I GUESS THAT COULD BE IT.
SO HE LOVED IT, BUT HE STOPPED? MAYBE...
HE DIDN'T WANT TO HAVE THAT EMPTY FEELING OF KNOWING YOU JUST FINISHED A SERIES THAT YOU LOVE...
BUT DOESN'T IT BOTHER YOU? NOT BUYING THE LAST VOLUME...!
AND IT WAS LIMITED PRINT!! UGH!!
NGH!
I TOTALLY UNDERSTAND YOU...!! WHAT TORTURE...!!

WELL, I THINK ANYONE WOULD BE BOTHERED BY SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

OW!

WE REALLY ARE ALIKE, AREN'T WE.

KUHA HAHA!

?

...I KNOW SOMEONE WHO'S THE EXACT OPPOSITE.

NO,

EVEN IF WHAT SHE WANTED WAS RIGHT ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR,

SHE WON'T DO ANYTHING NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, AND NEVER TRIES ANYTHING NEW.

EVEN IF SHE WERE DROWNING IN A FLOODING ROOM, SHE'D PROBABLY STAY INSIDE UNTIL SHE DROWNED.

A SHUT-IN COWARD I'D NEVER BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND.

COULD YOU UNDERSTAND SOMEONE LIKE THAT?

...TO BE HONEST, I HAD A PHASE WHEN I WAS LIKE THAT...

SO I CAN'T SAY I DON'T UNDERSTAND AT ALL?

IN MY CASE THOUGH... I HAD SOME PEOPLE WHO WERE THERE TO PULL ME UP...

BEING ONLY CONCERNED WITH MYSELF AND SHOWING NO INTEREST WHATSOEVER TO THE OUTSIDE,

ALWAYS ASSUMING THAT WHAT WAITED FOR ME ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR WAS THE WORST POSSIBLE OUTCOME.

...HMM.

I KNOW SOMEONE LIKE THAT, TOO.

WELL, THAT'S ENOUGH ABOUT ME.

BUT AS WE SPENT MORE TIME TOGETHER, I UNDERSTOOD.

AT FIRST, IT WAS JUST LIKE YOU SAID. THEY WERE CLOSED UP, WITH THE DOOR SHUT.

THEY ONLY PRETEND TO NOT SHOW INTEREST,

BUT ARE REALLY PEEKING THROUGH A CRACKED-OPEN DOOR.

SO THAT'S WHY, EVEN IF THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING,

I WANT TO SHOW THEM DIFFERENT THINGS AND HOPE THAT'LL MAKE THEM HAPPY.

HM HM...

BECAUSE YOU LOVE HER, RIGHT?

?

?

?

WAIT JUST A SECOND, WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "WHAT?"

WHAT YOU JUST SAID ONLY SOUNDS LIKE YOU WANT TO MAKE A GIRL YOU LOVE HAPPY.

WHAT!?

SERIOUSLY.

YOU'RE KIDDING ME. NOW THAT'S A TWIST.

IT'S NOT L-LIKE... THAT.

WELL... I MEAN,

THANKS FOR THE HELP.

I SHOULD REPAY YOU SOMEHOW...

NO, IT'S OKAY.

...IS THAT WHAT I LOOK LIKE TO OTHERS...?

HM...

LET'S SEE...

OH... OKAY.

NOPE.

MY FAMILY MOTTO IS "YOU CAN HAVE SOMEONE OWE YOU, BUT NEVER OWE ANYTHING TO ANYONE ELSE."

HOW ABOUT I TELL YOU ABOUT SOMETHING YOU GUYS WANT TO KNOW?

...HUH?

BUT WHAT SHOULD I ACTUALLY TELL YOU...?

I CAN'T SPILL EVERYTHING, THAT'D BE TOO MUCH.

WHAT DO YOU THINK,

KYOICHI NEKUNI?

I CAN TALK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED WHEN I RAN INTO THAT GOOD-LOOKING DOG LADY,

OR MAYBE ABOUT THAT GEEZER WHO LOOKED LIKE A PRIDEFUL CRIMINAL...

OH, BUT THEN IT'D BE HARD KEEPING IT JUST A HINT...

SENPAI!

YOU...

SANA...!?

GET AWAY FROM HIM...!!

I...

I'VE NEVER SEEN A YOKAI WITH THIS SCENT BEFORE!!

OH?

I THOUGHT YOU WERE A USELESS, SPINELESS COWARD,

BUT YOU'VE GOT SOME GOOD REACTIONS.

...THERE WERE A COUPLE OF HINTS.

YOU LOOK LIKE YOU WERE SUSPICIOUS OF ME.

I DIDN'T THINK THAT THIS WHISTLE... WOULD BE SPLIT SO CLEANLY JUST FROM DROPPING IT.

AND I NEVER SAID THE PERSON I KNOW WAS A GIRL, YET YOU SAID "YOU LIKE HER"...

.....

A PICTURE!? REALLY!?

LEMME SEE! LEMME SEE!

HEAD

THAT THING

A-AND WHAT SEALED THE DEAL... WAS...

THE PICTURE THAT SURPRISINGLY CAUGHT ALL YOUR CRITICAL FEATURES... I GUESS..?

Hate to admit it, but

Whaaat that's lame.

I... FORGOT T...

RIGHT HERE

IT'S RIGHT HERE

OH WELL. AND WHAT NOW?

IF YOU'RE GONNA GRAB ME, THEN I CAN ASSUME YOU WANNA PICK A FIGHT, RIGHT?

HUH?

SENPA...

NGH!

KAHAHA!

WELL EITHER WAY, I DON'T FEEL LIKE I'LL EVER LOSE TO SOMEONE

WHO'S MOPING AROUND BECAUSE HE LOST A FAMILY MEMBER!!

THE CULPRIT IS RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME, AND I...

...

HE'S RIGHT.

AND WAS MUCH EASIER TO MANIPULATE.

THE LITTLE KITTY HAD A LOT MORE FIGHT IN HER

NATSUHO AND I...

AGREED THAT WE'D CATCH THE CULPRIT TOGETHER.

OH?

BUT I KNOW ONE THING FOR SURE.

IT'S TRUE THAT I'VE BEEN MOPING AROUND AND I HAVEN'T REALLY COME TO PEACE WITH IT...

BUT...

IF I'M GOING TO MAKE THAT SHY, GOOD-FOR-NOTHING CAT

NOT MAKE THAT FACE ANYMORE, THEN I...

BEFORE THAT, THERE'S SOMETHING I WANNA SAY...

GO AHEAD.

HOW DARE YOU MANIPULATE A SHY GIRL LIKE NATSUHO!!!

I CAN'T MOPE AROUND ANYMORE!!!

IF YOU WANNA KILL ME, GROW A PAIR AND DO IT YOURSELF!!!

HAH!

NOW THAT'S MORE LIKE IT!

I WAS WRONG ABOUT YOU, YOU DAMN RAT!!!

CHAPTER 11

A FEW MINUTES BEFORE SANA REGROUPED WITH KYOICHI:

I'LL BE BACK FOR SURE...!
HEY! WAI...

I'M SORRY, NATSUHO-CHAN...!
PLEASE LEAVE THE REST TO ME...!
WHAT?

WAH!

...EVEN AT A TIME LIKE THIS... WHY AM I...

HAS TO BE ANOTHER WAY...
...THERE

HE MAKES ME FEEL LIKE THIS INSIDE... I REALLY...
THE INSIDE OF ME IS STILL SCREAMING.
I THINK IT'S THAT WAY...

CHAPTER 11: THE HATEFUL CAT THAT DOESN'T CATCH THE RAT

HATE HIM...!!

...DAMN IT...

WHAT'S THIS?

YOU DON'T SEEM LIKE A STRANGER TO FIGHTING.

OR DID HE FORGET ABOUT ME...?

THE FIGHT IS TOO CLOSE-QUARTERED. WHEN CAN I MAKE MY MOVE...?

WHAT... SHOULD I DO...?

...NGH!

YOU SHOULDN'T BE LOOKING AWAY IN A FIGHT!

SANA!!

AH—

HEY!

You'll stretch my jacket again

I'M GOING TO USE... THE TAG THAT MY SISTER GAVE TO ME...!

DOG STYLE, THIRD FORM...!

ACTIVATE!

WEAVING BITE!!

A SPELL TAG? NOT SOMETHING YOU SEE EVERY DAY.

OH?

DON'T REALLY WANNA TOUCH THAT.

TAKE...

TCH.

...

OOPS.

...WHOA.

OH?

HAH.
TOO
BA—

NICE ONE,

SANA.

GOT YOU...!

HE MADE HIS MOVE BY PREDICTING HOW I'D DODGE!?

HAH!

NOT BAD—

WHAT?

KYAH!?

WAH!?

!?

HERE YOU GO.

SANA!?

SA—

WATCH OUT!

SANA!? YOU'RE GONNA-

HE- WAIT!

KJHAHAH!

I'D LIKE TO SAY NICE TRY, BUT...

I HIT HIM WITH EVERYTHING I HAD, BUT IT DIDN'T EVEN FAZE HIM...

AND HE HASN'T EVEN USED HIS ABILITY YET.

HE MIGHT NOT BE ALL TALK, AFTER ALL...

Oh man, did my jacket stretch? I hope not

I STILL

DON'T FEEL LIKE I'M GONNA LOSE.

YOUR BIG SIS GOT ME WITH HER FIRST STRIKE.

KUHAHAH. BUT I'M SO DISAPPOINTED, PUPPY.

YOU KNOW WHY?

AND YOU KNOW WHAT'S FUNNY?

EVEN AFTER ALL THAT, SHE STILL GOT ARRESTED BECAUSE I TRANSFORMED INTO HER.

Arf!

KUHAHAH.

OH, SORRY. DID I TOUCH A NERVE?

BECAUSE... I MADE A PROMISE...

I WON'T LET HIM... GET TO ME.

...I'M FINE.

SANA...!

DON'T LISTEN TO HIM...!

THAT I'D TAKE ON...

BOTH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE INUHARA FAMILY AND HER UNEASINESS...!

はー…

…?

I'M PRETTY SURE YOU HAVEN'T FULLY ADAPTED TO IT YET, ANYWAY.

OH WELL.

…

JUST LIKE THE LITTLE KITTY, NOT EVERYTHING GOES THE WAY I PLAN, HUH.

SO THAT PUPPY OVER THERE IS THE CURRENT HEAD?

YOU'RE KIDDING ME.

WAIT, WHAT?

LET'S JUST DO THIS.

SANA!
WATCH O-

SANA!!

WH...

WHAT...?

SANA!

YOU POOR THING.

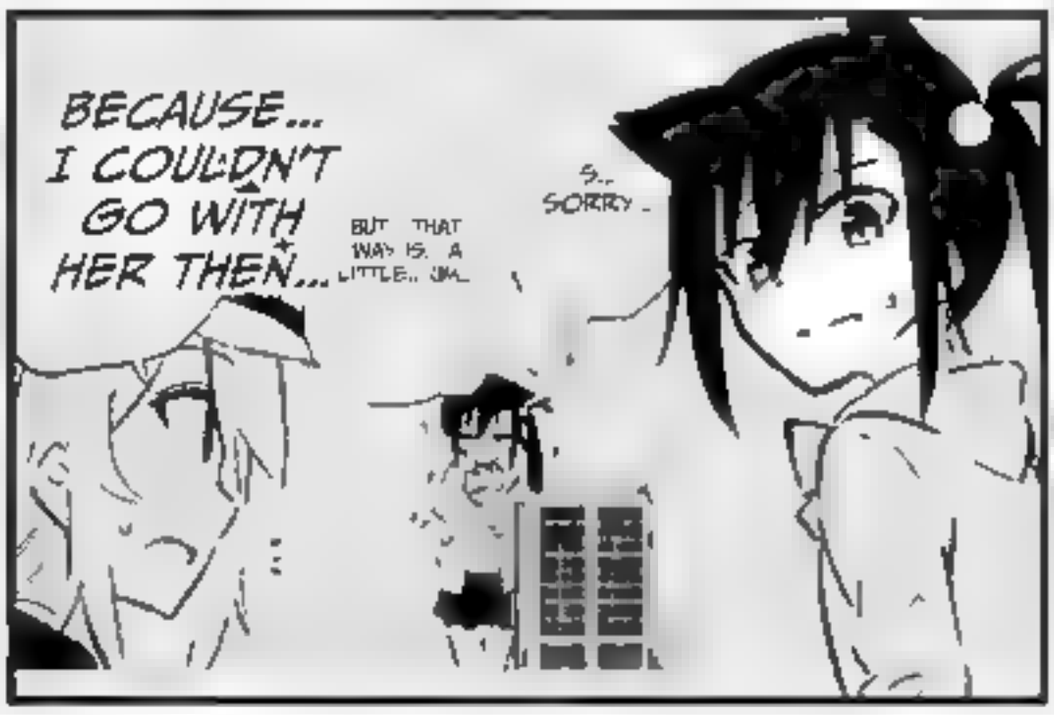
BUT YOU HAVE TO PAY YOUR DEBTS.

NA...

NATSUHO...!

……

YO! LITTLE KITTY!
HOW 'YA DOING?
EH?


BECAUSE... I COULDN'T GO WITH HER THEN...
BUT THAT WAS IS A LITTLE... UM...
S... SORRY.

NATSUHO...
CHAN...

...RIGHT?
S... STOP IT...
THE INJHARA FAMILY... HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ANYTHING...

YOU'RE STANDING ON THE WRONG SIDE.

HERE. YOU SHOULD BE RIGHT HERE.

HEY, LITTLE KITTY.

HEY, DID YOU FORGET WHAT YOU CAME TO THIS CITY FOR?

WH...

WHAT DO YOU...

DID YOU FORGET THAT YOU'RE THE HATEFUL CAT?

HAVEN'T...

...FOR-
GOTTEN.

I...

I
HAVE...

HE'S THE ONE WHO MANIPULATED YOU AND MADE YOU LOSE CONTROL!

NATSUHO, DON'T LISTEN TO HIM.

...WHAT?

KUHAHAHHAH! WELL, I GUESS THAT'S HOW IT'D FEEL LIKE, SINCE YOU DON'T HAVE ANY MEMORIES OF IT.

MANIPULATED?

BUT AFTER THAT, ALL I DID WAS MAKE HER LOSE SOME OF HER MEMORIES.

SURE, I STIRRED THE FIRE A BIT.

ALL I DID WAS CHANGE BACK THE LITTLE KITTY'S HATE BACK TO THE WAY IT WAS BEFORE SHE CAME TO THIS CITY.

...NO...

AS PROOF, YOUR MEMORIES FROM TODAY ARE GONE TOO, AREN'T THEY?

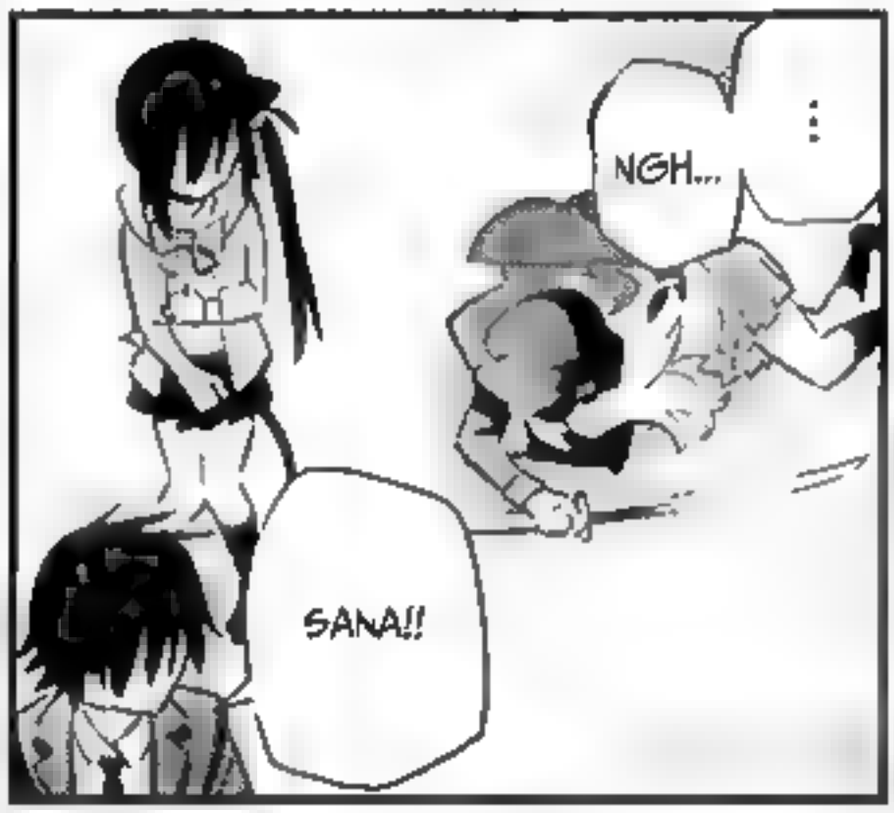
AM I RIGHT?

SO DON'T ACCUSE ME OF SOMETHING AS SINISTER AS MANIPULATING HER.

SHE DID EVERYTHING OF HER OWN FREE WILL, AND SHE'S THE ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OF IT.

…
NATSU-
HO...?

I'M A—
ALRIGHT...


…
NGH...
SANA!!

NATSUHO...
CHAN...

…
THAT'S...
IF I'M STILL
ON THE RUN...
AS THE
CULPRIT...
I CAN'T... PASS
THROUGH THE
BARRIER... AND
GO HOME...

OH
YEAH,
JUST
NOW,
YOU SAID
SOMETHING
ABOUT CATCHING
ME TOGETHER
WITH THE LITTLE
KITTY, WHAT'S
THAT ALL ABOUT?

MY OH MY. YOU REALLY DON'T LIKE ME, DO YOU?

WHAT'S THIS?

SO YOU'RE ACCUSING *ME* OF BEING THE CULPRIT, WHEN YOU CAN'T EVEN REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED?

AND THEN YOU CAN GO BACK TO THE MOUNTAINS.

WELL IF THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM, YOU'VE GOT NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

YOU CAME HERE TO KILL THE NEKUNI, DIDN'T YOU? SO YOU'RE PREPARED TO BE HUNTED, RIGHT?

IF YOU WAIT A LITTLE BIT, I'LL TELL YOU ANOTHER WAY OUT.

YOU'RE STANDING ON THE WRONG SIDE, LITTLE KITTY.

...SO, I'M GONNA SAY THIS AGAIN.

...NATSUHO...

I'M GONNA HEAD BACK NOW.

OH WELL, JUST THINK ABOUT IT.

I ALREADY DID WHAT I CAME HERE TO DO.

WELL, I DID THINK ABOUT TAKING YOU HOSTAGE WHEN THE LITTLE PUPPY CAME.

WHAT, YOU *WANT* TO BE KILLED? WHAT'S THE RUSH?

UH, NO?

I told you, I came to buy a book

DIDN'T YOU COME TO KILL ME...?

When did you.

WHEN YOU CALLED OUT TO ME, I COULDN'T HELP BUT LAUGH.

TODAY WAS JUST A COINCIDENCE.

NO... THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN...

THAT'S WHEN I DECIDED I'D PLAY ALONG AND PRETEND TO GET ALONG WITH YOU, NEKUNI.

BUT I DIDN'T THINK WE'D *ACTUALLY* GET ALONG. THAT WAS UNEXPECTED.

ポス

BUT I'M GLAD I CAME.

EMPATHY IS IMPORTANT, ISN'T IT?

NOW THAT I KNOW WHAT KIND OF PERSON YOU ARE,

KILLING YOU WILL BE MUCH MORE ENJOYABLE.

ALRIGHT, HERE'S HOW I'M GONNA REPAY YOU.

I STILL OWE YOU.

OH, WAIT,

?

...WELL THEN, I'M GONNA TAKE OFF NOW...

MY GOAL IS TO TAKE REVENGE AGAINST THE NEKUNI FAMILY. I WILL ATTACK AGAIN.

BUT SINCE I OWE YOU NOW,

I'LL GIVE YOU A HINT TO WHAT DAY I'LL COME.

IT'S NOT RIGHT AWAY, SO TAKE YOUR TIME FIGURING THIS OUT.

HOW DO WE KNOW THAT YOU'RE NOT LYING...?

...WHY WOULD YOU NEEDLESSLY PUT YOURSELF AT A DISADVANTAGE...?

...AND BESIDES,

I'VE BEEN TAUGHT THAT YOU CAN HAVE SOMEONE OWE YOU, BUT NEVER OWE ANYTHING TO ANYONE.

ALL I CAN SAY IS "JUST BELIEVE ME"...

MY NAME'S TOYA.

THAT'S YOUR HINT.

SEE YA, KYOICHI NEKUNI, LITTLE KITTY, AND YOUR FRIEND.

I DON'T FEEL LIKE I CAN LOSE ON THAT DAY.

ARE...

ARE YOU... ALRIGHT?

TOYA...?

I...

I DON'T THINK I CAN...

I'M... I'M SORRY.

ALRIGHT, THEN LET ME CARRY YOU.

CAN YOU GET UP?

SANA! WE HAVE TO TAKE YOU TO THE HOSPITAL RIGHT AWAY...!

...!

UM, WELL...

WITH YOUR HEIGHT, IT MIGHT BE A BIT...

CARRY HER...

LET ME...

I'LL...

PLEASE...

SHE DID EVERYTHING OF HER OWN FREE WILL,

AND SHE'S THE ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OF IT.

LET ME...

ALRIGHT, I'M COUNTING ON YOU,

NATSUHO.

YEAH...!

...!

IT'S MY FAULT, TOO...

...NO,

NATSUHO-CHAN...

...I'M SORRY,

ずい

IF YOU TRY TOO HARD AND DROP SANA, I'LL KISS YOU AGAIN.

...IF YOU GET TIRED, WE CAN SWITCH.

I...
I'LL... BE FINE...

I SAID TO DIRECT YOUR HATE TOWARDS ME.

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING... SOMETHING LIKE THAT AT A TIME... I HATE YOU...

WHA... WH-WH- WH-WHAT....

BACK THEN,

DON'T WORRY ABOUT YOUR PAST SELF THAT COULDN'T CONTROL YOUR HATE BEFORE YOU CAME HERE.

I'LL HATE YOU FOR ALL ETERNITY...

DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME... TO HATE YOU...

YOU...

...BUT EITHER WAY,

HAVE I REALLY CHANGED SINCE I CAME HERE...?

I'LL ALWAYS BE THE HATEFUL CAT.

THERE'S STILL A BIT OF TIME BEFORE MORNING, SO IMMA HIT THE SHOWER AND CHANGE...

AND THEN,

NOW THEN... WHAT'M I GONNA DO?

I'M FINALLY BACK...

I'M GONNA GO SEE KYOICHI-SAN...!

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

ウラミコイ　コイ　ウラミコイ

*A RI IS AN OLD UNIT OF DISTANCE MEASUREMENT USED IN JAPAN.

CHAPTER 12: AN OX'S LOVE IS LIKE A THOUSAND RI

GEEZ...

THERE ARE... SO MANY OF YA...

SHOOT...

HYAH!

A SPIDER OGRE...!? I DIDN'T SEE IT THERE...

OH NO, THIS ISN'T GOOD, IT'S THE TYPE WHEN THE MORE I STRUGGLE, THE MORE I...

AND I'M TIRED...

NOW I'VE DONE IT... IT GOT BOTH OF MY ARMS...

HI-

TCH!

DON'T CALL ME POPS, CALL ME DADDY.

LET'S NOT COPY YOUR MOTHER'S SPEECH HABITS, OKAY?

...!! THANKS A BUNCH,

PO-

AYAKA,

...NO, WHERE IS THE NEXT ONE?

YOU CAN TAKE A REST NOW, IF YOU...

ANYWAY, YOU MUST BE EXHAUSTED.

WHAT?

DON'T FORGET...

WHAT YOU PROMISED ME, DADDY...!

TWO DAYS AGO

GOICHI-SAMA WAS KILLED BY THE HATEFUL CAT...!

I HAFTA GO TO KYOICHI-SAN...!

HOLD ON A SECOND...

AYAKA...

YOU CAN'T GO,

AYAKA.

USHIGURA FAMILY
FORMER HEAD

YUSEI USHIGURA

WHY...

CAN'T I?

THAT IS WHY WE, WHO EXCEL AT FIGHTING, ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS AREA.

THE USHIGURA HOUSE IS LOCATED NEAR THE OGRE GATE.

LISTEN.

.....

WHAT ABOUT BEIN' KYOICHI-SAN'S BODY-GUARD...?

...BUT THEN...

YOU HAVE TO FULFILL YOUR DUTY AS THE HEAD OF THE USHIGURA FAMILY.

AND A GREAT NUMBER OF OGRES ARE APPROACHING THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY NEAR OUR HOUSE.

IF THE HEAD ISN'T THERE AT A TIME LIKE THIS, THEY'LL LOSE MORALE, AND EVENTUALLY THE BATTLE.

LISTEN TO ME, AYAKA.

RIGHT NOW, THE BRANCH FAMILY IS HOLDING THEIR GROUND, BUT THEY'LL EVENTUALLY BE OVERWHELMED.

YOU UNDERSTAND, DON'T YOU, AYAKA?

PROTECT KYOICHI-SAN...?

WHO'S GONNA...

...THEN

WHAT...?

AT FIRST, OUR FAMILY ASSUMED THE ROLE BECAUSE WE GOT ALONG WELL WITH THEM, BUT...

THIS ISN'T LIKE IT WAS BACK THEN, WHEN SANA-CHAN STILL COULDN'T WIELD A SWORD.

HIS BODYGUARD IS SANA-CHAN OF THE INUHARA FAMILY.

POPS...!

...THAT'S NO LONGER NECES-SARY.

GUARDING THE NEKUNI FAMILY ISN'T THE USHIGURA FAMILY'S ORIGINAL JOB.

BECAUSE YOU WANTED TO DO IT, WE WERE ABLE TO EXTEND IT ALL THE WAY UNTIL NOW...

BUT YOU CAN'T DO IT AT THE EXPENSE OF YOUR TRUE RESPONSIBILITY.

...THERE ARE TOO MANY OGRES THIS TIME.

WE'LL HAVE TO MAKE CAMP OUTSIDE, AND WON'T BE BACK FOR THREE OR FOUR DAYS.

...DO YOU REALLY NOT WANT TO GO, NO MATTER WHAT...?

THEN...

I...

U

...I'M SORRY, AYAKA.

IF I... DON'T GO...

THE BRANCH FAMILY WILL BE IN DANGER, RIGHT...?

AT THE VERY LEAST,

LET ME MAKE YOU A PROMISE.

IF YOU PERFORM YOUR DUTY, THERE ARE NO PROBLEMS WHATSOEVER.

SO IF YOU ELIMINATE ENOUGH OGRES THAT YOUR HELP ISN'T NEEDED ANYMORE,

YOU CAN GO TO KYOICHI-KUN.

I'M... SO TIRED...

.....!!

BUT I'M...!

NOT GONNA!!

FALL IN A PLACE LIKE THIS!!

ALRIGHT...

NEXT!!

NOW THAT I'VE PASSED ON MY ABILITY, THE BEST I CAN DO IS HOLD A SMALL BOULDER...

So sad.

GAAH, I'M BEAT... MY BACK'S REALLY FEELING IT...

AND THE TIMING OF IT ALL, JUST AS GOICHI-SAN PASSED AWAY... ARE THEY ALL RELATED...?

DADDY!

OGRES LOVE TO FIGHT, BUT THEY'RE SAVING THEIR STRENGTH AND NUMBERS BACK IN THE MOUNTAINS... THEY'RE NEVER THIS CUNNING OR METHODICAL...

BUT IT'S STRANGE...

YOU REMEMBER YOUR PROMISE, RIGHT..?

WHAT!?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN... DONE?

I'M DONE...!

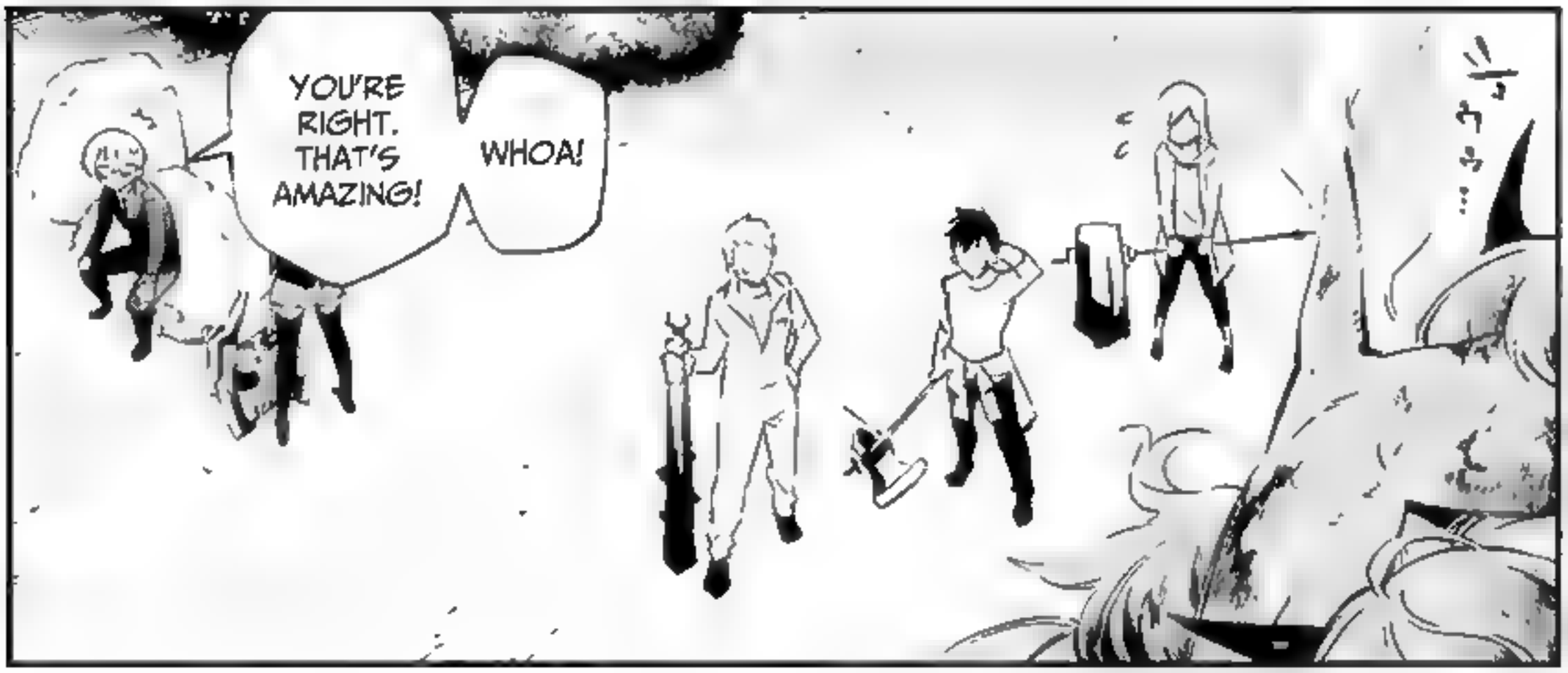
はぁ

はぁ

WHAT IS IT, AYAKA?

UM, YES?

DADDY!


YOU'RE RIGHT. THAT'S AMAZING!
WHOA!
...ヒィッ

'KAY...
...THEN
I GOTTA WORK HARD FOR A LIL' LONGER... HJH.

UM, AYAKA... THERE ARE STILL SOME OGRES...
RIGHT?
THIS IS PRETTY MUCH IT, RIGHT...

IN THE MOUN-TAINS...

BUT JUST IN CASE... COME BACK AFTER ONE DAY, OKAY?

...NO, SORRY. IT'S ALRIGHT.

WE'LL DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

HAHAHA, COME ON NOW.

A-OH-OW OWOWOW! MY BACK!

DADDY!

PO...

THANKS...!

ARE YOU SURE THE REST OF THEM WILL BE ALRIGHT WITHOUT AYAKA-CHAN?

AYAKA-CHAN IS AMAZING!

WE WERE HAVING SO MUCH TROUBLE, BUT SHE TOOK CARE OF THEM ALL IN NO TIME.

..AYAKA'S GOTTEN MUCH BETTER AT SELF-CONTROL.

AND I CAN FIGHT TOO.

WE'LL BE FINE. AYAKA WENT OFF ON THEM. THEY'LL BE WARY OF US NOW.

...I REALLY DO

SPOIL HER.

I DO WANT HER TO FULFILL HER DUTIES,

BUT IT'S BE ALRIGHT FOR HER TO GET SELFISH A LITTLE BIT EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE AND NOT BEING TIED DOWN TO FAMILIAL RESPONSIBILITIES...

That'll depend on my wife's mood

On right, come pitch for our baseball game next month.

CHANGE CLOTHES

Ahhh

TAKE BATH

はぁ…

GET HOME

NAP

RING RING RING

BAM

NAP

RING RING RING

BAM

NAP

Z z z

I OVER-SLEPT.

CHIRP CHIRP CHIRP CHIRP

OH, IT'S OFF...

GOTTA CALL...

WHY DIDN'T THEY... GO OFF...

HER FAULT

MAN... I THOUGHT I SET MY ALARMS TO GO OFF EARLY IN THE MORNING...

KYOICHI SAN

KYOICHI-SAN

SAYA-CHAN

KYOICHI SAN

HARU-CHAN

TURNING ON

Hu...

IT'S JUST BEEN TWO DAYS SINCE YOU GOT HURT, RIGHT?

ARE YOU SURE IT'S ALRIGHT FOR YOU TO BE WALKING AROUND, SANA?

I STAYED AT HITSUNO-SAN'S PLACE, AND GOT A LOT BETTER.

YES.

Thank you

GLANCE

GLANCE

OH, YEAH. HER HOME IS A CLINIC... AND HER ABILITY IS SOMETHING TO DO WITH HEALING, RIGHT?

YES. WELL TO BE MORE PRECISE, SHE MORE OR LESS AMPLIFIES NATURAL HEALING,

SO I'M NOT COMPLETELY RECOVERED YET...

...BUT I LET MY GUARD DOWN THE OTHER DAY...

AND I CAN'T JUST STAY LYING DOWN FOREVER...

I SEE...

FIDGET

OTHERWISE, I'D BE A DISGRACE AS THE HEAD OF THE INUHARA FAMILY...!

FIDGET GLANCE GLANCE FIDGET

I-I'M NOT... FIDGETING...

Awawa sowawa...

Th-thanks

My ears stood up

THERE AREN'T THAT MANY PEOPLE HERE, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SO FIDGETY. NO ONE'S GONNA COME.

OH YEAH, IS YOUR HAND ALRIGHT?

WHEN WE CHANGED THE BANDAGES YESTERDAY, YOU STILL HAD YOUR CUT, RIGHT?

WHO WAS IT THAT SAID IT'D HEAL RIGHT AWAY?

Fufunahah

...TH—

THAT'S RIGHT...

IT WAS ME...

.....

SHE'S SEEMED REALLY DOWN SINCE BACK THEN...

I THOUGHT SHE'D REACT DIFFERENTLY...

What did you say!? I hate you!

WAS THE CUT TOO DEEP...?

...WHY HASN'T IT HEALED?

WELL THEN, LET'S GET TO THE MAIN TOPIC.

ABOUT WHAT HE SAID, THAT HE'D ATTACK AGAIN ON ANOTHER DAY.

MY NAME'S TOYA. THAT'S YOUR HINT.

YEAH, ABOUT THAT...

TO BEGIN WITH... I WONDER...

IF WE CAN... TAKE HIM AT HIS WORD...?

I ALSO THOUGHT ABOUT WHAT DAY HE'LL COME...

BUT EVERYTHING I CAME UP WITH SEEMED TOO SIMPLE...

...YEAH, ME TOO.

IT DIDN'T FEEL LIKE HE WAS LYING...

AND WE DON'T HAVE ANY OTHER CLUES...

OR MAYBE A FREEZING NIGHT...

YEAH... TODAY IS NOVEMBER 30TH, SO EITHER WAY, IT WON'T BE FOR A WHILE...

28	29	30 TODAY	1
10 NIGHT OF THE 10TH?	11	12	
17	18 10 + 8 ?	19	

WHEN YOU HEAR "TOYA," THE FIRST THING YOU THINK OF IS "TEN" AND "NIGHT," SO THE NIGHT OF THE TENTH.

OR MAYBE "TEN" AND "EIGHT" AND THE EIGHTEENTH.

FREEZING NIGHT ? →

*IN JAPANESE, "TO" CAN MEAN "TEN" OR "FREEZING," AND "YA" CAN MEAN "NIGHT" OR "EIGHT."

SO RIGHT NOW, THE BEST GUESS WE HAVE IS THE TENTH OR THE EIGHTEENTH.

OR WE COULD JUST GUARD THE HOUSE EVERY DAY...

KYOICHI'S GREAT-AUNT

FUTAYO YANAGARA

...HOW WORRI-SOME.

WE'VE BEEN VERIFYING THEIR SAFETY, BUT THEY HAVEN'T RETURNED...

NO, MA'AM.

I SEE.

SATO, KYOICHI AND INUHARA HAVEN'T RETURNED YET?

YES, FOR OUR REPUTATION.

I HAVE NO INTEREST IN THE SAFETY OF SOME FAILURE WHO KILLED HIS OWN PARENTS.

OH!

!?

WHAT IF NATSUHO STAYS IN CAT MODE?

WELL, IF WE GUARD THE PLACE 24/7, THEY'LL FIND ME.

She hates me

AND I'LL DEFINITELY GET LOCKED DOWN BY GRANNY FUTAYO...

FLASHBACK

I'm hungry... I don't have any food or ya

What happened?

W... WELL, IF YOU CAN'T DO IT, THEN IT'S ALRIGHT...

THERE...

THERE WEREN'T ANY GOOD BOXES THERE...

NO...

NO WAY...

THERE MIGHT BE NOTHING FOR US TO DO IF WE'RE LUCKY...

AND THERE'S A BARRIER THAT YOKAI ABSOLUTELY CAN'T BREAK.

WELL, WE ALREADY HAD SANA REPORT THE POSSIBILITY OF AN ATTACK.

It's chewy!

YES... HE DEFINITELY HAD THE SCENT OF A YOKAI...

Oh, this part's delicious!

YOU'RE SURE THAT TOYA'S A YOKAI, RIGHT?

HOKEKYO!

BUT WHAT BEAST, I COULDN'T TELL...

UGUISU MOCHI

IT WAS JUST AS SISTER SAID. I COULD SMELL THE SCENT OF A BEAST MIXED IN...

*JAPANESE BUSH WARBLERS ("UGUISU"), HAVE A DISTINCT MATING CALL, TYPICALLY WRITTEN AS "HOKEKYO." WHAT THE GROUP IS EATING IS UGUISU-MOCHI, WHICH IS FISH-SHAPED MOCHI FILLED WITH RED BEAN PASTE AND TOPPED WITH GREEN SOY FLOUR.

KAMA-ITACHI?

A YOKAI THAT CUTS WITH A SCYTHE-LIKE ARM.

HOWEVER, THE KAMAITACHI'S CUT DOESN'T HURT, OR EVEN BLEED.

BUT THE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF HIS ABILITY CLOSELY RESEMBLE THAT OF A KAMAITACHI.

HE MIGHT BE A YOKAI WITH A DIFFERENT TYPE OF SWORD OR SCYTHE.

BUT I FELT PAIN AND BLED...

GLAAAAAAAARE

...YEAH.

...WE ALREADY DISCUSSED MOST OF WHAT WE KNOW, SO WE CAN CALL IT A DAY...

MIGHT NOT BE PRUDENT.

BUT THEN AGAIN, WE ALREADY KNOW THAT HE'S A TRANSFORMING YOKAI, SO DRAWING CONCLUSIONS FROM JST APPEARANCES...

UM,

BESIDES,

...

THAT'S,

I'D HATE THAT...

WHAT ARE YOU GLARING AT? I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU LIKE THAT.

YOU WANT A BITE?

You fatty

I-

I WASN'T GLARING...

INDIRECT KISS

HATE WHAT?

?

I... I CAN'T LET AYAKA-SENPAI KNOW ABOUT THIS...

Birds!?

I DON'T WANT THAT... S-SUCH A HORRIFYING FOOD...

Those poor birds.

Heeeeere kitty kitty kitty.

THIS SIDE! I WAS GOING TO GIVE YOU THE TAIL SIDE!

N... NO!

PHEW.

AYAKA USHIGURA

HM?

BUT FIRST, NATSUHO AND SANA ARE GOING SHOPPING...

WE SHOULD PROBABLY THINK ABOUT THE DATE SOME MORE...

HUH? WHERE AM I?

...? I CAN'T HEAR YOU...

YOU KNOW THAT SHOPPING CENTER NEAR WHERE YOU LIVE...

OH, BUT NATSUHO'S WITH US...

AYAKA!?

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?

I KNEW YOU WERE GOING OGRE EXTERMINATING, BUT I COULDN'T GET A HOLD OF YOU FOR TWO WHOLE DAYS!

YEAH, THAT OPEN COURT

WHERE THEY SELL TAIYAKI.

I'LL WAIT FOR YOU.

...THIS MIGHT BE A GOOD TIME TO TELL HER.

UM...

OH CRAP.

SHE'S HALF-ASLEEP.

BEEEP BEEEP

CLICK

O'HAY...

I'LL FEE AH...

EAH.

OH, SENPAI...!?

OH CRAP
OH CRAP
OH CRAP
OH CRAP
OH CRAP
OH CRAP

OH CRAP
OH CRAP
OH CRAP
OH CRAP
OH CRAP
OH CRAP
OH CRAP
OH CRAP
OH CRAP
OH CRAP

I... I SEE. NOTHING YOU CAN DO ABOUT THAT.

NATSUHO-CHAN SAID SHE'D BE FINE BY HERSELF...

I bet she really didn't want to do that, but did it anyway

S-SORRY, AN ELDERLY MAN ASKED ME FOR DIRECTIONS TO A STORE EARLIER...

What?

WHERE'S NATSUHO!?

HUH? SANA!?

Come on, hurry!

BY... BY THE WAY, SANA,

HAVE YOU HEARD THE STORIES OF AYAKA BEING HALF-ASLEEP?

Pleaaase

Ayakaaaaa!!?

Stoooop!

WAS TOO EXCITED ABOUT THE SCHOOL TRIP AND COULDN'T SLEEP

Please let me borrow some shampoooo.

Ayakaaaaa!!?

HUH? YES. PEOPLE STILL TELL THEM IN MIDDLE SCHOOL...

You can say they're legendary, even

WHAT...!? IS SHE...

LONELY

WHAT IF A LOT OF PEOPLE SUDDENLY SHOW UP...? WILL THEY GET MAD AT ME BECAUSE I'M TAKING UP A FOUR-SEAT TABLE BY MYSELF...? I SHOULD GIVE IT UP IF THAT HAPPENS, RIGHT...? DO I NEED TO OFFER THE SEAT BEFORE THEY ASK...!?

WHAT'S TAKING YOU SO LONG? I HATE YOU! WHAT'S TAKING YOU SO LONG? I HATE YOU! WHAT'S TAKING YOU SO LONG...!

NYAN NYAN

NYAN

BUT I DON'T WANT TO MOVE AND GET LOST AGAIN...

TWITCH

I... I'M GOING TO STAY LIKE THIS...

GAAH, I CAN'T CALM DOWN...!

WHAT AM I DOING!? STOP TRYING TO ESCAPE REALITY!

WAAAAAAH!

...?

I TOLD HER TO BE CAREFUL NOT TO GET TOO LITTLE SLEEP, SO WHY...!

YEAH, I KNOW!

IF A HALF-ASLEEP AYAKA-SENPAI RUNS INTO NATSUHO-CHAN...!

TH-TH-TH-TH-THIS IS BAD...!!

WE HAVE TO MOVE NATSUHO TO A SAFE PLACE BEFORE AYAK—

NO, THIS ISN'T GOOD...! I CAN SEE WHAT'LL HAPPEN FROM A MILE AWAY...

A HATEFUL CAT APPEARED

FIGHT!

DING!

!

So sleepy

Ayakaaaaa!!?

INEVITABLE DISASTER

AND SHE'S ASLEEP!!?

...WHAT IN THE WORLD IS NATSUHO DOING?

SHE'S ALREADY HERE!!!

AAAAAAAAAH!?

sneaky sneaky

.I FEEL LIKE I'M IN A VIDEO GAME...

LET'S... GET NATSUHO-CHAN WITHOUT WAKING HER UP.

SHE HASN'T NOTICED YET...

I've never seen an actual snot bubble before

OH, SHE HEARD.

TWITCH

NATSUHOOO.

NATSUHO.

THERE YOU ARE...

WH—WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG...!

I HATE...

POP

WA WA AAA AAA HH NN !!!

NUHY YYYN NN!

I'M SORRY! I'M SORRY!

PLEASE DON'T TALK...!

H- HWAH!?

HWAH AH OO-

WHAT ARE YOU DOING...?

OH... SANA-CHAN...?

HYAH!

WHERE HAVE I...

...?

I-IT'S BEEN, BEEN A WHILE...

O-OH, YOU WERE BACK, SENPAI...?

WHAT!!?

SHE JUST GOT HERE SO I-I'M SHOWING HER AROUND!

SHE'S MY COUSIN!

UH, UM,

UM... WHO'S THAT NEXT TO YOU...?

OH, PROBABLY...! YOUR COUSIN...!

THAT'S...A TERRIBLE LIE, BUT WE CAN FOOL AYAKA WHILE SHE'S STILL HALF-ASLEEP...!

WAAAAH, THIS IS BAD... I CAN'T WATCH...

WHY WOULD YOU MAKE UP A LIE LIKE THAT?

SANA, GAME OVEEE- RRRR!

GAME OVEEE- RRRR!

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

WOULD YOU MAKE UP A LIE LIKE THAT?

WHY

GAAAH, THAT WAS SO BAD! IT'S AN AWFUL, STUPID, FORCED PUN!

SHE SAID, "WE'RE SHOWING HER AROUND *CUZ IN* THE MALL YOU WANNA BE NICE TO EVERYONE..."

N--NO, YOU HEARD HER WRONG.

TH--THIS ISN'T GOOD, IF SHE FINDS OUT THAT SHE'S THE HATEFUL CAT, AN ALL-OUT BATTLE MIGHT BREAK OUTAWAWAWA...

KYOICHI-SAAAAAN!!!

EWAAAAHHH!!!

I'M OKAY...

I... I'M OKAY...

IS EVERYTHING ALRIGHT!?

ARE YOU ALRIGHT!?

WHAT ABOUT THE HATEFUL CAT!? WHAT ABOUT GOICHI-SAMA!?

MAYBE NOT.

CHAPTER 13: LOVE IS LIKE AN OX

.....

ARE YOU REALLY?

L-LOOK, PERFECTLY FINE, HEALTHY, ALIVE, AND KICKING...

Except for my head.

So close.

I...

I TOLD YOU ALREADY, I'M FINE...

WAIT, WHAT? WE'RE GOING BACK TO THAT TOPIC? AND YOU'RE STILL HALF-ASLEEP!?

Just when I thought we were off the hook!

SO WHO'S THAT GIRL OVER THERE?

SHE'S TOTALLY NOT IN UNIFORM ASIDE FROM THE SHIRT!

WE'RE DEFINITELY BUSTED...!

WAH! THIS IS TERRIBLE...

BORROWED FROM SANA

SEE!? SHE'S WEARING OUR MIDDLE SCHOOL'S SHIRT...

T— TRANSFER STUDENT!! SHE'S A TRANSFER STUDENT!

UM...

UNDERSTANDING

A TRANSFER STUDENT.

AH, OKAY.

Aaaaaaah...

ANYWAY, WE'RE GOING SHOPPING FOR CLOTHES AND STUFF NOW. DO YOU WANNA COME TOO?

...? SURE, I DON'T MIND, BUT...

YOU DON'T KNOW WHEN THE HATEFUL CAT'S GOIN' TO ATTACK YOU, SO ARE YOU SURE IT'LL BE ALRIGHT...?

UH, I'M SO SORRY...

THAT I WAS HALF-ASLEEP A-AND TACKLED YOU...

A-AND... JUMPED ON TOP OF... YOU...

WELL, YOU *WERE* HALF-ASLEEP...

Don't worry about it.

YEAH, WHEN YOU THINK OF IT THAT WAY, IT'S JUST A PUSHOVER...!

Pushover!?

OH! YOU'RE RIGHT...! IT WAS ALWAYS PLACES WITH BARELY ANY PEOPLE...!

IT'LL NEVER COME TO A PLACE WITH LOTS OF PEOPLE IN BROAD DAYLIGHT.

Coward!?

THE HATEFUL CAT LOOKS SCARY, BUT IT'S ACTUALLY A COWARD.

YEAH, PRO-BABLY.

UH...

NA... NATSUHO-CHAN! PLEASE CALM DOWN...!

There, there

I hate you.

GRRRRR...

SO WE DON'T HAVE TO WATCH OUT FOR IT FOR NOW.

YEAH, YEAH! A PUSHOVER!

.....

OH YEAH, WHAT'S THAT GIRL'S NAME?

IT'D BE GREAT IF YOU COULD SPEND SOME TIME WITH HER AND HAVE SOME FUN...

UH... SHE DOESN'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS HERE, SO SHE'S KINDA LONELY.

OH... SHE'S A BIT SHY... AND HER NAME'S NATSUHO...

UM... DID I DO SOMETHING...?

...I KNEW IT.

GOOD THING I CAME.

WHAT? WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT?

...?

I DON'T MIND, BUT...

...? WHAT?

ME? NOT THE HATEFUL CAT...?

I CAME TO GIVE YA A PIECE OF MY MIND.

BUT...

LET'S SAVE THAT FOR LATER.

TO MEET... YOU...

N.CE...

...

.....

NICE TA MEET YA, NATSUHO-CHAN!

IF WE'RE GONNA DO THIS, WE'RE GONNA DO IT RIGHT!

ALRIGHT!

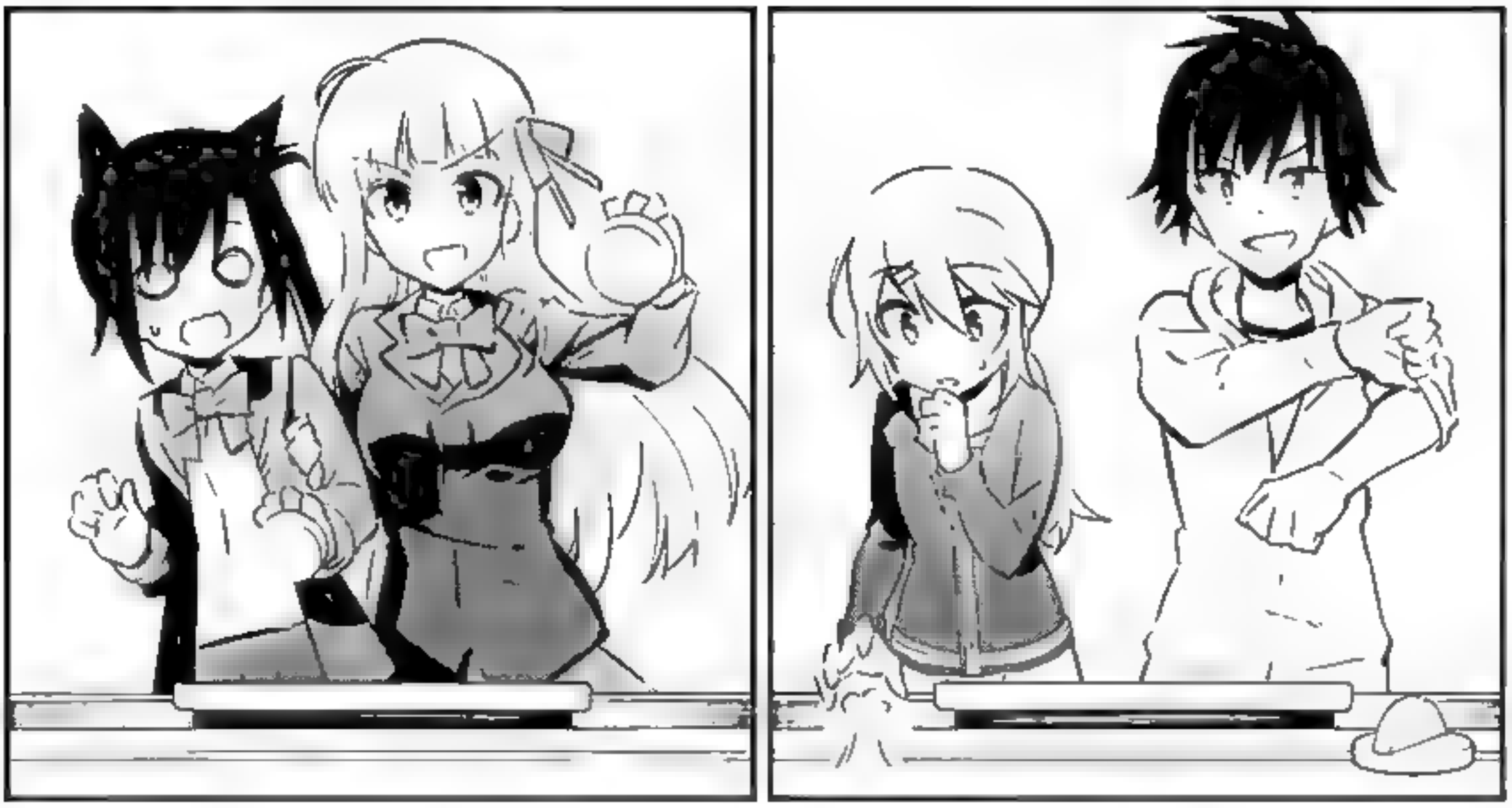
WE'RE GONNA PLAY 'TIL WE DROP!!

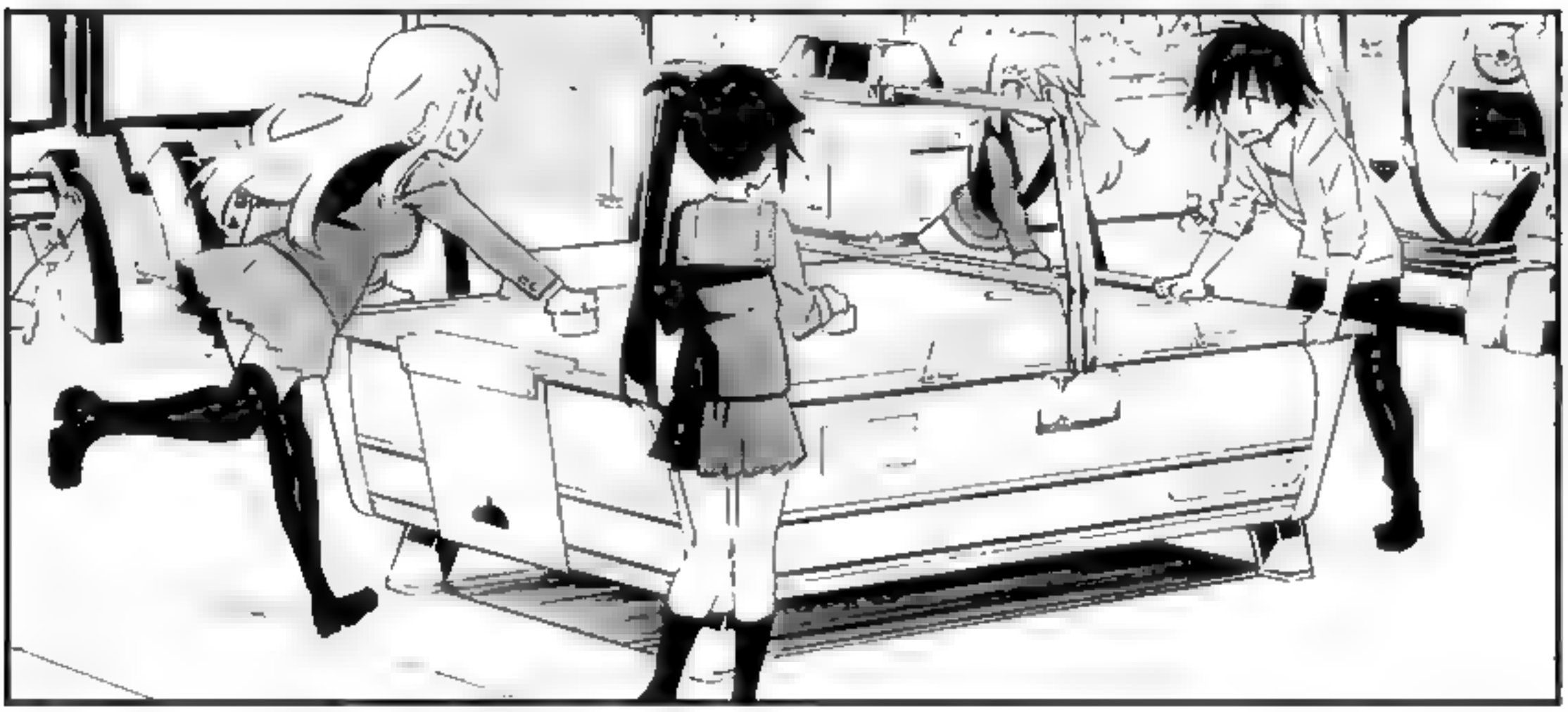
Alright! Finally, a break that feels like a break!!

YEEEAH...

WAIT, WHAT!?

That's how you're going to show her a good time?





ULTRA STRENGTH

SUPER REFLEXES

LIKES → EXERCISING

YAWN

CRUSHING VICTORY

We give up.

HERE.

YOU'RE GETTING ALONG BETTER THAN I THOUGHT YOU WOULD.

I THOUGHT YOU'D ACT MORE LIKE A BORROWED CAT.

...IT'S WEIRD...

YEAH.

Wait, what do you mean, a "borrowed cat"...?

R-REALLY?

DOES IT LOOK THAT WAY...?

AND TODAY... I FOUND OUT THAT THEY CAN MAKE THESE KINDS OF EXPRESSIONS, TOO... SO NOW EVEN MORE SO, I...

...AFTER FIGHTING THEM, I...

FEEL... WEIRD.

I GUESS IT'S BECAUSE...

I FOUGHT BOTH OF THEM.

I'VE ALWAYS FELT THAT...

PEOPLE WERE JNKNOWN BEINGS TO BE AFRAID OF... BUT NOT THEM...

I DON'T THINK IT'S WEIRD.

WHO CARES HOW YOUR CURIOSITY STARTED?

IF IT LEADS TO SOMETHING LIKE THIS WHERE YOU GET TO SEE THE OTHER SIDE OF SOMEONE OR SOMETHING, DOESN'T THAT MAKE IT WORTH IT?

I ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT IF I GOT TO KNOW SOMEONE, I'D ONLY SEE THEIR BAD SIDE.
!?
I NEVER FELT CURIOUS BACK IN THE VILLAGE.
Wait, what?

BUT MAYBE IT ISN'T SUCH A BAD THING AFTER ALL
FOR CURIOSITY TO BRING ME TO KNOW SO MANY PEOPLE.
It's cramped in here

FIDGET TWITCH

Can you doodle on it?

!!!!!

WHY WOULD YOU TAKE A PICTURE HERE..?

DON'T THEY HAVE CAMERAS ON THEIR PHONES...?

WHAT'S GOING ON!? IS IT AN EMERGENCY!?

Can't you tell what's going on?

WHAT?

S-SORRY! WE'LL BE RIGHT BACK...!

NATSUHO-CHAN IS LIKE A LITTLE KITTY, AND SHE'S MAKIN' ME FEEL RELAXED... KINDA...

OH NO, THIS IS GREAT!

Ehehe

HUH?

Y-YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT... SHE IS LIKE A CAT...

THANKS.

YOU'RE A HUGE HELP, I OWE YOU ONE.

OH, SANA? YEAH. A LOT HAPPENED TO HER, TOO...

?

YOU'RE A GOOD SENPAI.

IT'D BE GREAT IF THE OTHER PERSON FELT HAPPIER, TOO...

...

AYA...?

BECAUSE YOU'RE LIKE THAT...!

!

...

...YOU

REALLY ARE...

HUH?

BECAUSE YOU'RE LIKE THAT, I CAME TO GIVE YA A PIECE OF MY MIND!

...AYAKA?

OKAY, LET'S GO BACK...

IT'S...! IT'S OKAY, YOU DON'T HAVE TO FINISH THAT SENTENCE...!

IF I WENT BY MYSELF, I WOULD HAVE GOTTEN LOST AND...

SORRY...

しゅん...

YOU SHOULD TRY IT IF YOU SEE A PRIZE YOU LIKE.

Here it is

LET'S SEE, DO THEY HAVE ANYTHING WE—

DO YOU HAVE THAT TICKET YOU GOT WHEN YOU BOUGHT YOUR CLOTHES?

OH, IT'S A DRAWING.

...? HJH? WHAT'S THAT RINGING SOUND...?

SECOND PRIZE

WANT!

THIRD PRIZE

5TH PRIZE: TEN PLACEMATS

Well, it wasn't that great of a prize to begin with

YOU COULD'VE GOTTEN THE FIFTH PRIZE, SO WHY D D YOU GO WITH THE PARTIC.PATION PRIZE...?

I FIGURED THIS'D HAPPEN...

STRANGE FLAVOR SNACK BAGS.

WELL...

I WON'T, I WON'T!

PROMISE ME...!

D--DON'T TELL ANYONE...

HE... SEEMS DOWN RECENTLY...

I CAN TELL... BY LOOKING AT HIM...

SO...

I THOUGHT HE MIGHT LIKE SOMETHING LIKE THIS...

...
...YEAH!
S-SO I THOUGHT I'D MAKE A NICE GESTURE...
A-AND HE'S LETTING ME LIVE WITH HIM...

I WAS STILL KINDA OUT OF IT BACK THEN... BJT WHEN I ASKED IF YOU WERE ALRIGHT,
YOU SAID YOU WERE OKAY, RIGHT?

A PIECE OF YOUR MIND...?
WHY?

THAT'S
NOT WHAT I MEAN.

LOOK AT ME, I'M PERFECTLY FINE...
...? WHAT ABOUT IT?

HAVE YOU BEEN ALRIGHT SINCE GOICHI-SAMA PASSED AWAY?

……!

JUST LIKE BACK THEN.

I CAME TO GIVE YA A PIECE OF MY MIND, BECAUSE...

W— WAIT, WAIT.

SURE, I MIGHT HAVE BEEN MOPING A BIT, BUT...

YOU KEEP WORRYIN' ABOUT OTHERS WHEN YOU SHOULD BE TAKIN' CARE OF YERSELF WHEN YER WEAK.

HE BELIEVED WHAT HE SAW ON THE SURFACE WAS ABSOLUTE, AND CUT OFF ANYONE WHO WASN'T OF USE TO HIM.

HE JUDGED PEOPLE BASED ON HOW USEFUL THEY WERE TO HIM, AND NEVER LOOKED AT WHAT'S INSIDE A PERSON.

BUT IT'S THAT GEEZER...!

WOULD I REALLY GET WEAKENED OR FEEL SAD ABOUT HIM...?

AND HOW HE TREATED ME SINCE THEN...

AFTER MY DAD DIED, HE KICKED ME OUT OF THE HOUSE...

I HATED HIS GUTS.

KYOICHI-SAN...

SO YOU DON'T REMEMBER

WHAT YOU SAID WHEN YOU WERE KICKED OUT OF THE HOUSE...

GET AWAY FROM ME.

I BET YOU'RE ONLY HERE BECAJSE YOUR DAD TOLD YOU TO COME HERE.

I—I'M NOT CRYING...

WERE YOU JUST CRYING...?

...WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?

JUST GO AWAY.

WHAT, YOU'RE THE BIG SISTER JUST BECAJSE YOU'RE A YEAR OLDER?

I CAN'T LOSE MY TEMPER... IF I HIT HIM AGAIN, I'LL LOSE MY ALLOWANCE AGAIN.

YOURE MY BIG SISTER...

B-BIG SISTER!

O-O-OW OW!

I-IF YOU NEED SOMEONE TO TALK TO,

YOUR BIG SIS IS HERE TO LISTEN...

GRAMPS TOLD ME TO GET OUT OF HERE.

AND WHEN I TRANSFERRED MY ABILITY BACK TO HIM TODAY... HE SAID...

HE DIDN'T SAY A WORD TO ME SINCE MY DAD DIED,

—

GET OUT, KYOICHI.

...I COULDN'T SAY ANYTHING BACK TO HIM.

EVEN WHEN I HAD MY ABILITY, I COULDN'T USE IT...

..AND I WAS A FAILURE AS THE HEAD.

YOU'RE A FAILURE, NOT A NEKUNI.

BUT FOR A BOY TO JUST CRY AND NOT DO ANYTHING ELSE IS A BIT... PATHETIC... OR...

...WELL, I SUPPOSE I CAN'T BLAME HIM FOR CRYIN'...

...BUT THAT'S WHY...

I'LL SHOW HIM THAT EVEN IF I'M A FAILURE, I CAN STILL BE USEFUL TO PEOPLE,

AND MAKE HIM ACKNOWLEDGE ME.

I'M GOING TO SHOW GRAMPS HOW WRONG HE IS!

...THAT

SOUNDS GREAT.

I

SAID SOMETHING LIKE THAT...?

NO MATTER HOW HARD YOU TRIED, GOICHI-SAMA WAS ALWAYS... THE SAME...

SO IT'S NO SURPRISE THAT YOU FORGOT AND JUST REMEMBERED THAT YOU WANTED TO BE USEFUL TO PEOPLE...

THAT'S WHY I THINK I KNOW WHY YOU'RE CONFUSED.

SURE, YA MIGHT NOT BE SAD ABOUT LOSIN' GOICHI-SAMA SINCE YOU TWO NEVER WERE CLOSE,

BUT AT THE SAME TIME,

YOU LOST YER CHANCE TO PROVE HIM WRONG AND RESTORE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM.

MAYBE YOU'RE FEELING REGRET BECAUSE OF THAT...?

SO I'M FEELING

REGRET.

SO THAT'S WHAT THAT FEELING WAS... THAT SENSE OF SADNESS AND FRUSTRATION...!

...I SEE.

I WONDER WHAT THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT...

I REALLY THOUGHT YOU CAME FLYING TO ME TO BE MY BODYGUARD.

THEY'VE BEEN TALKING FOR A REALLY LONG TIME...

I'D MAKE SANA-CHAN UNCOMFORTABLE...

AND IF I CAME AND SAID "I'M THE BODYGJARD!" AND MADE A SCENE,

BUT I WAS JUST SO WORRIED ABOUT KYOICHI-SAN...

WELL I'D BE LYIN' IF I SAID I WASN'T WORRIED...

BUT I TRJST SANA-CHAN.

SO TO GET TO THE POINT,

YOUR CURIOSITY NOT ONLY NEEDS TO BE AIMED AT WHAT AND WHO'S AROUND YA,

BUT YOU SHOULD BE CURIOUS AND PAY ATTENTION TO YERSELF AS WELL!

YOU'VE BEEN TRYING TO PUT ON A TOUGH ACT FOR A WHILE NOW... SO...

UM...

A-AND...

I'LL TAKE THAT TO HEART.

THANKS...!

I THINK... SO...

WHEN THIN'S ARE TOUGH... YOU CAN LET YOUR GUARD DOWN A LITTLE BIT...

WH...

H...

HOW ABOUT...

IT?

YOU- YOU'LL FEEL BETTER...

CAN JUST JUMP INTO MY ARMS... AND...

YEAH.

WHAT ARE YOU...?

WHA- WAIT A SEC.

I'M SAYIN'... YOU...

WHA-

GAME OVER..!!

IF WE DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS IN A SECLUDED ROOM LIKE THIS, IT'S GAME OVER!!

I-IDIOT! WE'RE IN HIGH SCHOOL NOW! WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "FEEL BETTER"..!?

!?

.....

What was I thinking ?

SORRY..

I-I'M SORRY...

Y-YOU'RE RIGHT...!

AYAKA, STAY THERE.

.....

?

..NO, IT'S BECAUSE OF ME THAT SHE'S TRYING SO HARD TO MAKE ME FEEL BETTER..

WHAT'S SHE DOING SOMETHING LIKE THIS FOR?

...

KYO-
KYO-
KYO-

...THANKS.

...I JUST NEED YOUR SHOULDER.

But I can't do it facing you, that'd be embarrassing.

...OF COURSE

COME TO THINK OF IT,

I'M IMPRESSED THAT YOU KNEW ALL THIS WHEN YOU WEREN'T AROUND ME WHEN ALL THIS WAS HAPPENING...

...WELL,

HOW LONG DO YOU THINK WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER?

...OF COURSE I'D KNOW.

EVEN IF I CAN'T SEE YOU IN PERSON,

I KNOW.

I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'RE HERE TO GIVE ME A PIECE OF YOUR MIND OR MAKE ME FEEL BETTER.

I—IF I GOT THE POINT across, IT DOESN'T MATTER.

は…？

WHY IS SOMETHING LIKE THIS...

I CAME HERE TO HATE HIM, NOTHING MORE, NOTHING LESS...

I'M THE HATEFUL CAT..

WHY...

WHY...?

YOU SHOULD BE CURIOUS AND PAY ATTENTION TO YERSELF AS WELL...!

I'VE HAD FAR WORSE INJURIES BEFORE... SO WHY...

WHY HASN'T IT HEALED YET...?

IT CAN'T BE...!

HEAL...

HEAL...

OH WELL. I'LL KEEP CHANGING IT EVERY DAY TILL IT DOES.

IT'S NOT HEALING UP, IS IT?

...NO.

NO... THIS...

I'M NOT... FORCING THE HEALING TO DELAY...

I'M NOT....

I UNCONSCIOUSLY DELAYED THE HEALING

NO...!

NO...

IT FELT SO NICE, BEING LOOKED AFTER BY SOMEONE.

I...

NO...

SO I COULD KEEP EXPERIENCING THOSE SHORT MOMENTS OF...

IS THIS FEELING

REALLY HATE?

I HEARD FROM SANA, BUT...

SHE REALLY IS MY BODYGUARD NOW, HUH...

...HM?

NATSUHO AND SANA AREN'T BACK YET..

THE HOUSE...

...YES.

MADE THE DECISION...

WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR A REALLY LONG TIME...

I'M SORRY...

WELL, IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT...

...BUT YEAH.

OH...

CRAP.

I'M STARTING TO FEEL LONELY ALREADY.

ぴっ

:

!?

!?

I...

AYAKA...?

I WANT TO

ALWAYS BE WITH YOU...

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

I WANT TO ALWAYS BE WITH YOU...

CHAPTER 14: CURIOSITY KILLED MORE THAN JUST THE CAT

UM... UH...

THAT...

SOUNDS LIKE A PROPOSAL...

OH NO! I GOT CAUGHT UP IN THE HEAT OF THE MOMENT AND BLURTED IT OUT WITHOUT THINKIN'!

TH-THAT'S NOT WHAT I-

NOT LIKE THAT...

Oh, you surprised me

WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR A REALLY LONG TIME, ALL THE WAY BACK SINCE WHEN I WAS ALL DEPRESSED...

I'D LIKE IT TOO... IF WE'RE TOGETHER.

This is kinda embarrassing to say

OH!

MAYBE I CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT IF I DIRECTLY ASK FOR IT?

...?
AYAKA?

EASILY...
DO...

IF YOU'RE THE HEAD, WITH YOUR AUTHORITY, YOU CAN...

...!
YOU'RE RIGHT!

I CAME TO MAKE HIM FEEL BETTER...

WHAT AM I DOING, MAKIN' MYSELF FEEL BETTER INSTEAD...?

...I'M...
HOPELESS...

IF I KEEP DOIN' THIS...

AND THAT'S WHY I CAN'T BE BOLD RIGHT NOW.

I GOT TOO COMFORTABLE AND SATISFIED, RELYIN' ON MY ROLE AS HIS BODYGUARD,

AND EVEN NOW, WITH KYOICHI-SAN, I'M.

ME BEIN' HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE WAS BECAUSE I HAD POPS COME UP WITH A COMPROMISE

SOMEDAY, HE'LL...

I'M GONNA MAKE POPS LET ME BE SELFISH,

BUT ALSO FULFILL MY ROLE AS AN USHIGURA AT TH' SAME TIME.

AND...

...NO.

I'LL ASK IT MYSELF.

I'M GONNA COME FLYIN' TO YA, LETTIN' EVERYONE KNOW THAT...

I'M THE ONE WHO PROTECTS YA, KYOICHI-SAN!

YEAH.

I'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU.

OH, WITH THE PASSING OF GOICHI-SAMA...

SHOULDN'T YOUR ABILITY HAVE RETURNED TO YOU BY NOW?

?

BJT I DIDN'T GO THROUGH THE TRANSFER..

AS LONG AS YOU HAVE THE RIGHTS, IT SHOULD RETURN TO YOU ON ITS OWN...

...IS THAT HOW IT WORKS?

BUT MAN, THOSE TWO ARE TAKING A LONG TIME...

Yeah.

...WELL, EVEN IF IT DID RETURN...

SENPAI!

OH!

Speak of the devil!

HUH?
JUST YOU,
SANA?

.....

I FIGURED
YOU'D BE
IN A PLACE
LIKE THIS.

LET'S
GO!

Come on!

HEY, THERE
ARE NO PEOPLE
AROUND RIGHT
NOW, IT'S
PERFECT!

HUH? WHY?

?

.....

.....

I'M NOT GOING.

...? WELL, NOW WHAT DO I DO...?

I WANT TO EXPLAIN WHO YOU ARE TO HER...

SINCE YOU KNOW, YOU FOUGHT HER BEFORE?

HEY, AYAKA'S LEAVING SOON.

NO.

IF WE DON'T EXPLAIN TO HER THAT YOU'RE A YOKAI NOW, WE'LL NEVER—

PLEASE, DON'T...

OKAY.

THAT ASIDE...

...ALRIGHT.

we'll do it next time

I GUESS THERE'S STILL A CHANCE THAT SHE'LL BE HOSTILE TOWARDS HER IF SHE FINDS OUT THAT SHE'S THE HATEFUL CAT.

...YEAH, JUST WHEN THEY FINALLY STARTED GETTING ALONG...

LET'S GO.

COME ON.

!?

!!

...I HATE YOU.

OR... KISS YOU...

I HATE YOU...

I HATE YOU...!

OR EAT WEIRD THINGS...

I TOLD YOU, I DON'T WANT TO GO...

YOU'RE ALWAYS FORCING ME TO... GO PLACES,

WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?

WHY ARE YOU ACTING LIKE THIS?

I CAN'T...

STAND YOU! I HATE YOU...!

NO... THIS ISN'T WEIRD.

THIS IS HOW... IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE.

YOU'RE A NEKUNI...

AND...

I'M THE HATEFUL CAT, WHO'S MEANT TO HATE YOU...

I HAVE TO HATE YOU...

ギリ…

I'M LEAVING FOR A WHILE.

DON'T LOOK FOR ME.

NATSUMO!?

HAS YOUR HEA...

SERIOUSLY, BE CAREFUL, YA HEAR...!?

THE HATEFUL CAT HASN'T BEEN SEEN IN A WHILE, BUT THAT'S WHEN...

OKAY, OKAY.

SANA-CHAN, YOU TOO!

UH—

YES...!

YOU TOO, SENPAI...

……

SOMETHING URGENT CAME UP, IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.

I DIDN'T GET TO SAY GOODBYE TO NATSUHO-CHAN...

WHAT COMES TO YOUR MIND...?

WHEN YOU HEAR THE NAME "TOYA."

UM, SENPAI... I HAVE A QUESTION FOR YOU.

WAIT A SECOND...

……?

OH SORRY, I FORGOT TO TELL YOU, IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH NUMBERS...

That's just a direct English translation

TEN☆ NIGHT!

DID I GET IT RIGHT?

OH!

UM...

...I'D LIKE TO COME WITH YOU, BUT...

SHE WAS ACTING WEIRD...

YEAH...

SENPAI, YOU'RE GOING TO LOOK FOR NATSUHO-CHAN, RIGHT?...

I HOPE IT REALLY WAS JUST THE HEADACHE...

...IT'S FINE IF IT'S AFTER THAT,

BUT DO YOU HAVE SOME TIME...?

THAT'S RIGHT, THIS MAIN CHARAC-TER...

DIDN'T HAVE A FAMILY...

WELL THEN...

OH!

SENPAI!

HAVEN'T SEEN YA IN A WHILE!

MAYBE YOU SHOULD STOP JUMPING ONTO AYAKA'S CHEST EVERY TIME YOU SEE HER?

I GOT EXCITED FOR NOTHIN'!

WHY AREN'T YA WITH AYAKA-SENPAI!?

HEY!

LONG TIME NO...

!!!

Are you a perverted geezer inside?

SANA'S DOWNSTAIRS?

YEP.

SHE SAID SHE WANTS TA LOOK INTO THE MASTERMIND BEHIND THIS INCIDENT.

SHE'S BEEN WORKIN' REALLY HARD.

SO THAT'S WHY SHE CAME 'ERE, LOOKIN' AT ALL THE LIBRARY ARCHIVES THE SASAMACHI FAMILY IS LOOKIN' AFTER.

SHE SAYS LOOKIN' IT UP ON THE NET AS USUAL AIN'T GETTIN' HER ANYWHERE.

YOU'RE A TERRIBLE FRIEND.

Nngngngh what are you filminggg

AND THIS IS HER FACE WHEN SHE CAME 'ERE!

And it's a video, too.

I LEFT A NOTE AT HOME...

YEAH, I LOOKED EVERY-WHERE FOR HER.

Oh, you went home once, too.

SENPAI...! WERE YOU ABLE TO FIND NATSUHO-CHAN...?

I'M SORRY. I DIDN'T MEAN TO CUT YOU OFF WHILE YOU WERE LOOKING FOR HER...

BUT WE MIGHT BE IN A BIT OF TROUBLE HERE AS WELL...

I SUPPOSE NOT.

NOW THAT I KNOW WHAT KIND OF PERSON YOU ARE,

I MIGHT BE ONTO SOMETHING WITH WHAT FAMILY THE ENEMY IS FROM,

AND WHAT DATE HE MIGHT ATTACK ON...

KILLING YOU WILL BE MUCH MORE ENJOYABLE.

NO, THERE ARE MANY VARIANTS ON THE LEGEND OF THE FOUNDING.

HUH? ISN'T THE THIRTEENTH FAMILY THE CAT?

MOST OF THE STORIES INCLUDE ONLY THE TWELVE FAMILIES, THE CAT, AND THE GOD. SO THAT'S A POPULAR MISCONCEPTION...

BUT THERE IS ONE BOOK THAT TELLS OF A THIRTEENTH FAMILY.

SENPAI, DID YOU KNOW THAT THERE WAS A THIRTEENTH FAMILY

IN THE LEGEND OF THE FOUNDING OF THE TWELVE CITY?

I DON'T FEEL LIKE I CAN LOSE ON THAT DAY.

I WAS REALLY HUNG UP ON WHAT HE SAID RIGHT THEN.

HOLD UP A SECOND. DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH HIM?

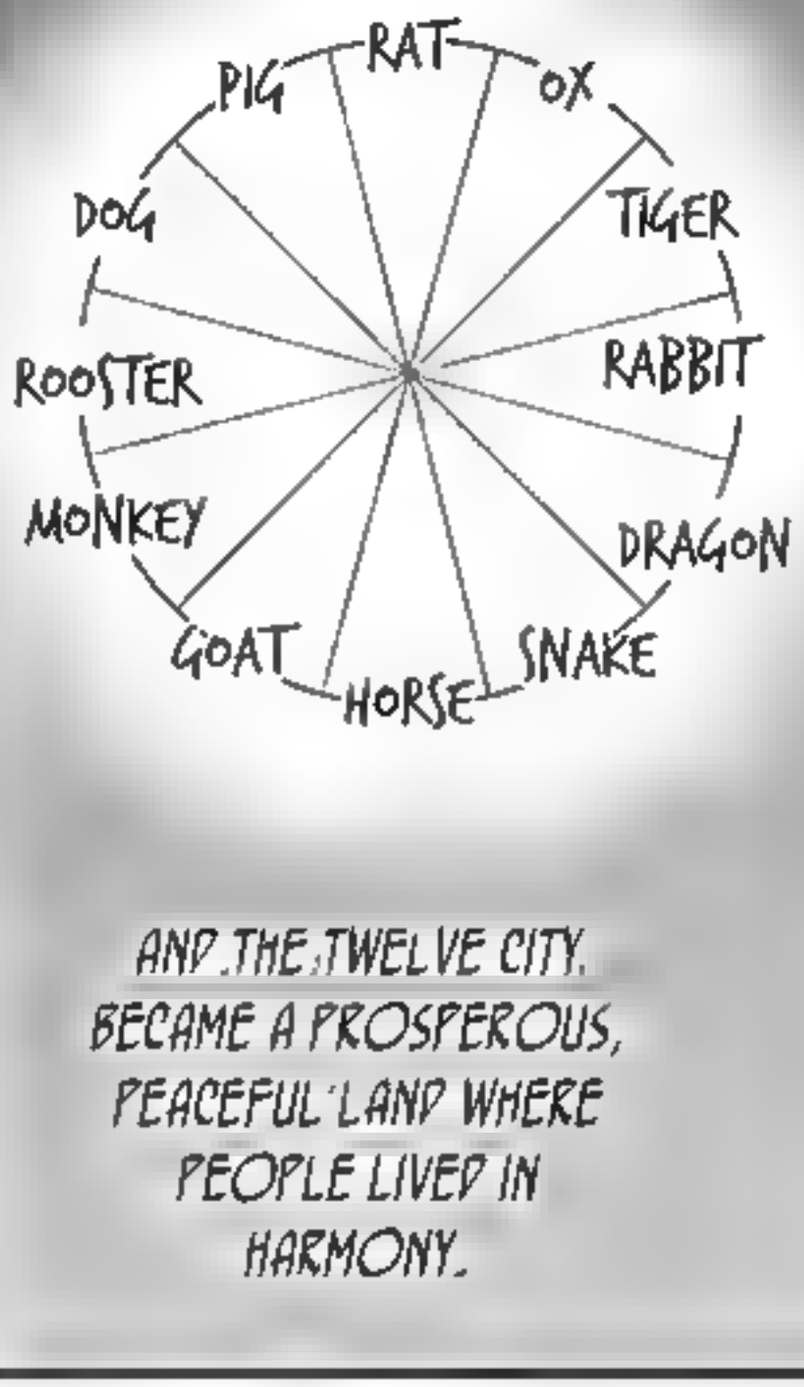
THAT MUST MEAN SOME SORT OF PREPARATION WILL BE COMPLETED THAT DAY,

OR THAT THAT DAY IS SPECIAL IN SOME WAY.

AND THAT'S WHEN I REMEMBERED THE THIRTEENTH FAMILY MENTIONED IN THIS BOOK.

Let me summarize it

THANKS TO THAT, THE TWELVE FAMILIES WERE PROTECTED FROM THE OUTSIDE AND FROM WITHIN, AND THE BARREN LAND WAS MADE FERTILE AGAIN.



AND THE TWELVE CITY BECAME A PROSPEROUS, PEACEFUL LAND WHERE PEOPLE LIVED IN HARMONY.

THE NEKUNI FAMILY TOOK PITY ON THEM AND DECIDED TO GIVE THEM AN ABILITY AND A JOB ON A SPECIFIC DAY.

THE THIRTEENTH FAMILY WHICH BORE A NAME OF A BEAST BARELY MISSED BEING INCLUDED IN THE TWELVE FAMILIES.

THE NAME WAS PROBABLY OMITTED ON PURPOSE.

...THIS IS JUST MY GUESS, BUT...

BUT WHERE'S THE NAME OF THE FAMILY? AIN'T THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT PART? WHY'S IT MISSIN'?

YEAH... THAT'S DEFINITELY A CONNECTION TO THE TWELVE FAMILIES...

THE "INSIDE" IS PROBABLY THE TWELVE CITY, SO THE OUTSIDE... WAS ENTIRELY MOUNTAINS THEN.
AND THE THREAT THAT DWELLED IN THOSE MOUNTAINS WAS...
THIS SAYS "PROTECTED FROM THE OUTSIDE AND FROM WITHIN."

...THE OGRES!

AND EVEN THE FAMILY NAME CANNOT BE WRITTEN DOWN.
IN OTHER WORDS, THERE WAS SOMETHING BETWEEN THE FAMILY AND THE OGRES THAT CANNOT BE MADE KNOWN TO THE PUBLIC,
BUT AFTER THE FOUNDING, THE DAMAGE WAS GREATLY REDUCED.
IT'S BEEN TOLD THAT THE HARM DONE BY THE OGRES WAS TERRIBLE BEFORE THE TWELVE CITY WAS FOUNDED.

SO WE NEED TO FIND A FAMILY THAT EXISTED WHEN THE TWELVE CITY WAS FOUNDED,

AND CAN'T BE KNOWN TO THE PUBLIC!

YES...!

COME TO THINK OF IT, SANA,

WHY DID YOU RAMP UP YOUR RESEARCH ALL OF A SUDDEN?

THAT'LL BE THE ENEMY'S FAMILY!

SHE ALSO TOLD ME TO BE CAREFUL.

WELL, WHAT AYAKA-SENPAI SAID IS WHAT GOT ME THINKING, BUT...

.....

BUT SHE JUST SAID "BE CAREFUL,"

AND TRUSTED ME AS YOUR BODYGUARD.

Sana-chan, you too!

SENPAI DOESN'T KNOW THAT I WAS INJURED AND CAN'T FIGHT TO MY FULL EXTENT...

SO I THOUGHT THAT SINCE I CAN'T FIGHT TO THE FULLEST,

I NEED TO AT LEAST GIVE EVERYTHING I CAN INTO WHAT I CAN DO.

TH—THAT'S NOT TRUE...!

YOU'RE SO MATURE, SANA.

NO, I REALLY DO THINK SO. YOU'RE FINDING WHAT YOU NEED TO DO AND TAKING RESPONSIBILITY TO DO IT.

...SHE HELPED ME TODAY, TOO.

ALL THIS TIME, I'VE JUST BEEN MOPING AROUND,

AND ALL I'VE BEEN DOING HAS BEEN GETTING HELPED OUT BY NATSUHO OR AYAKA.

...THEN,

ARE YOU STILL MOPING NOW...?

THANKS TO THAT, I HAVE MY MOTIVATION.

AND TAKE DOWN THAT MILLE-FEUILLE HEAD.

AND NOW, WHAT I NEED TO DO IS FIND HIM,

THERE IT IS...!

COULD THIS BE IT? LOOK, IT HAS A CHARACTER OF A BEAST IN ITS NAME... AND DOESN'T LIVE IN THE TWELVE CITY?

OH, YOU'RE RIGHT. THEY SURE AIN'T HERE.

WITH THIS... I NOW KNOW THE DATE OF THE ATTACK AS WELL.

NO,

..ALRIGHT, NOW LET'S LOOK INTO THIS FAMILY...

HIS NAME DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH NUMBERS.

THAT WAS ACTUALLY CORRECT.

AYAKA-SENPAI SAID "TEN NIGHT," RIGHT?

"TEN" IS THE NAME OF A YOKAI.

THE NAME OF A WEASEL THAT BECAME A YOKAI AFTER OBTAINING YOKAI POWERS.

THAT'S RIGHT...!

...! I SEE, THEN THE FAMILY NAME THAT WE JUST FOUND IS A PERFECT MATCH...

I'M GLAD I DIDN'T WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW TO LOOK INTO THIS...!

IS OBVIOUS.

AND WHAT KIND OF SPECIAL DAY THE NEKUNI FAMILY, WHICH HAS A POWER ASSOCIATED WITH SPEECH, WOULD GIVE TO THIS FAMILY...

THE NAME OF THE BEAST IS

THE WEASEL, ITACHI.

THE ITACHIZUKA...!!

AND THE NAME OF THE FAMILY IS

AND THE DAY THE ITACHIZUKA FAMILY RECEIVES ITS ABILITY IS...

THE FIRST, TOMORROW...!

*THE FIRST OF THE MONTH IN JAPANESE IS "TSUITACHI."

A BARRIER THAT STOPS YOKAI.

BUT THIS ONE'S A LOT MORE POWERFUL THAN THE ONE SURROUNDING THE CITY.

BUT

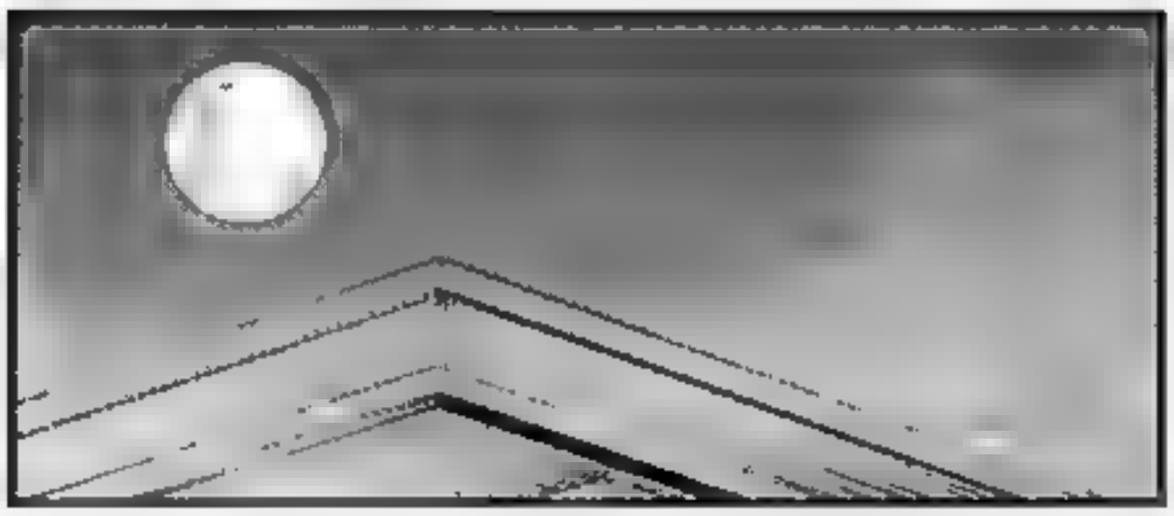
TODAY IS THE ITACHIZUKA'S DAY.

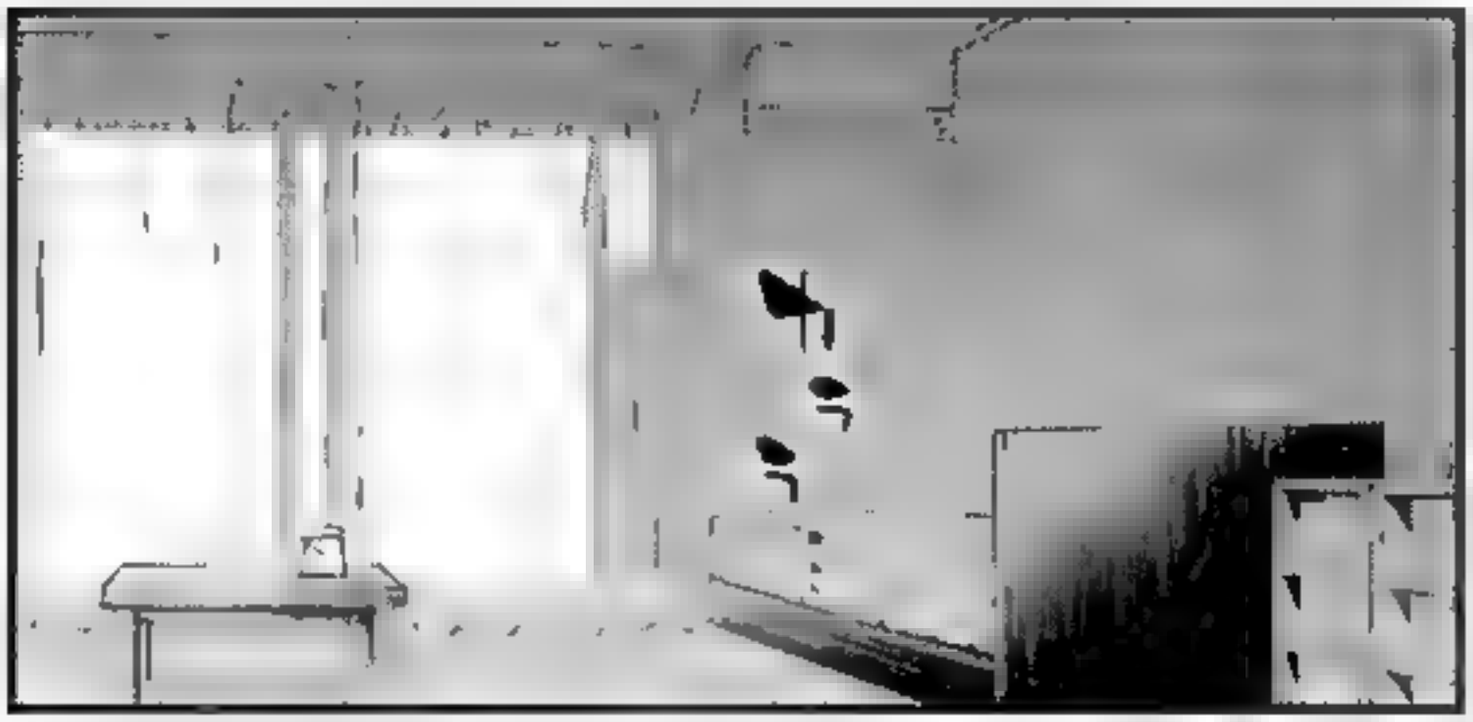
NEKUNI.

AND YOU'RE THE ONE WHO GAVE US THIS POWER,

I HAVE THE POWER OF THE GOD AND YOKAI WITH ME.

SHATTER





...HE'S STILL NOT BACK...?

THANKS! I LOVE STUFF LIKE THESE! LET'S OPEN IT TOGETHER WHEN YOU GET BACK! P.S. I MIGHT BE BACK LATE TONIGHT, SO YOU CAN USE THE BED IF YOU WANT

NGH—

AAA...

AH...

SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT TO HIM...

...I DIDN'T WANT TO

NO.

IF WE DON'T EXPLAIN TO HER THAT YOU'RE A YOKAI NOW,

WAS IT BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT HIM TO SAY THAT I'M A YOKAI?

BUT...

...I HATE YOU.

WAS I HAPPY BECAUSE I'VE BEEN TREATED AS THE HATEFUL CAT ALL MY LIFE?

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, THOSE WORDS THAT HE SAID TO ME WHEN WE FIRST MET...

JUST A NORMAL GIRL.

IT TOOK EVERYTHING I HAD TO SAY I WAS THE HATEFUL CAT TO HOLD IT IN.
WHEN HE STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND TO ME, MY HEADACHE BECAME WORSE.

BUT HIS HANDS WERE ONES THAT TRUSTED ME AND SHOWED KINDNESS TO ME.
IF MY HEADACHE GETS BAD, I END UP SCRATCHING EVERYONE BECAUSE I'M THE HATEFUL CAT.

I DON'T WANT TO SCRATCH THOSE HANDS EVER AGAIN.

I DON'T WANT TO BE SEPARATED FROM HIM...

I WANT HIM TO CARE FOR ME...

BUT EVEN MORE SO... I DON'T WANT TO HURT HIM.

BECAUSE I UNDERSTAND NOW.

I DIDN'T WANT TO ADMIT IT, BUT NOW I KNOW.

HATED HIM...

AND NOTHING ELSE...

THEN THIS FEELING I DON'T UNDERSTAND IS...

I NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT ANYTHING LIKE THAT.

UM, WHAT I MEANT WAS..

AFFEC-TION...?

IF THIS ISN'T HATE,

NO...!

NO, IT'S WORSE...

THANKS! I LOVE STUFF LIKE THESE! LET'S OPEN IT TOGETHER WHEN YOU GET BACK! P.S. I MIGHT BE BACK LATE TONIGHT, SO YOU CAN USE THE BED IF YOU WANT

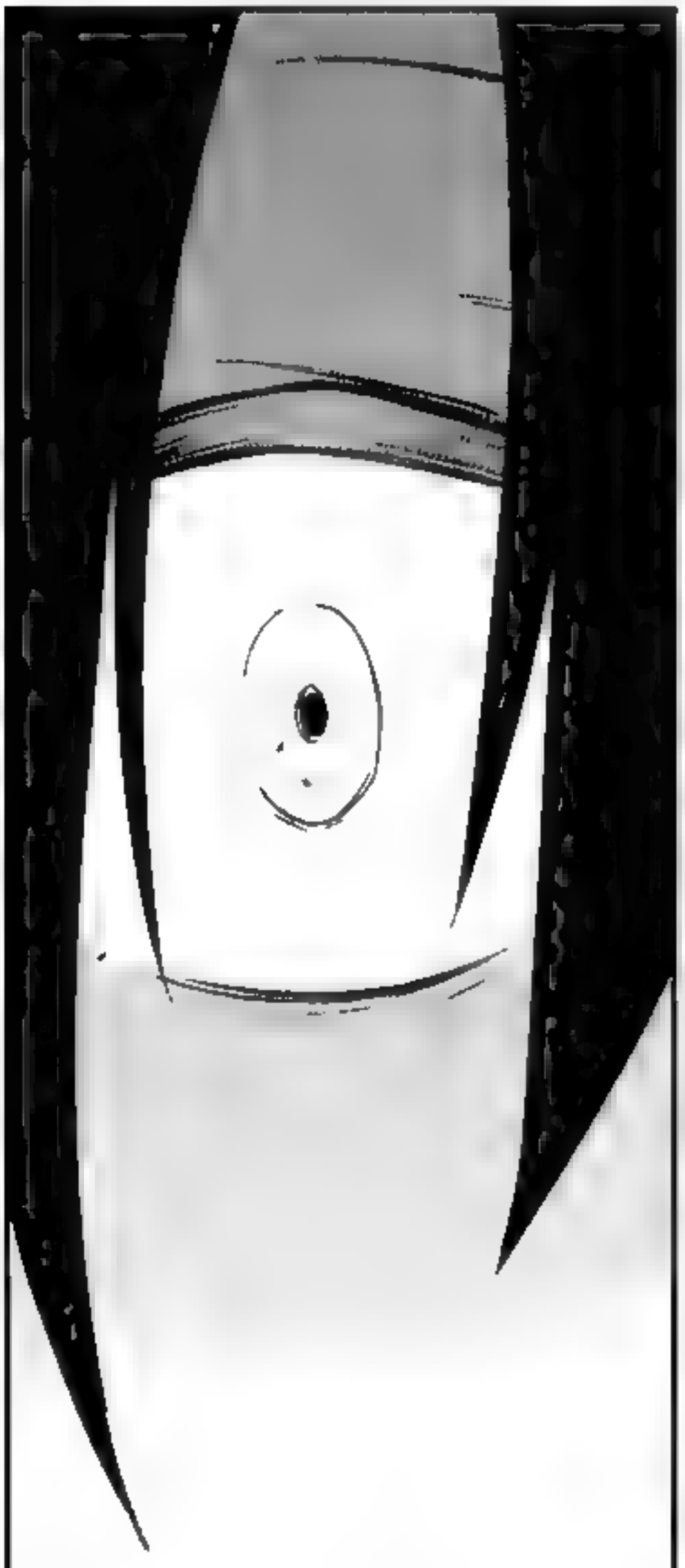
I'VE FELT IT BEFORE. THIS FEELING...

NO...!

WHAT?

HUH?

...THE BARRIER IS GONE?



SOMEONE IS FIGHTING... AGAINST A HUGE MONSTER...?
WHAT...!? WHAT IS THAT...?

THERE'S SOMEONE OVER THERE, TOO...
.....?

AH...

IF ONLY I HADN'T GIVEN IN TO MY CURIOSITY AND GOTTEN INVOLVED WITH HIM...

IF ONLY I HADN'T GIVEN IN TO MY CURIOSITY AND LISTENED TO WHAT HE WAS SAYING...

THIS...

THIS NEVER WOULD HAVE HAPPENED...

...YOU'RE LATE,

LITTLE KITTY.

THAT CURIOSITY KILLED!

IT WASN'T JUST THE CAT

AAAA

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

ウラミコイ　コイ　ウラミコイ

FRICTION HEAT

あとがき

きました三巻です！
とうとう連載始まって1年くらい経ちました。
連載が始まって忙しいとあっという間ですね、
と。穏やかな顔で言いたかったのですが
なっかなかの長さでした！長っ！

オリジナルを描くに当たって
新しく経験することがいっぱいあったので
はやくこなれて穏やかな顔になりたいものです。
…いや、顔は普通でいっか

スペシャルサンクス

武田ルイ様
古来歩様
田部井悠記様
三崎祐輝様

担当Y本様

&読者の皆様方

予告

それなりの賭けでもらうぜ。

せめて夏歩か千恵がいたら

敬意を払って殺してやる

お前もそう思ったろ？

なあ、子国

裏鬼門にも鬼が出たってさ

透也、貸しだ。

俺にがある。

恨めない恨み

「恨み来、恋、恨み恋。」Uramikoi, Koi, Uramikoi. 4

今冬発売予定

※単行本発売時のまま収録しています。

恨み来.恋.恨み恋。

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